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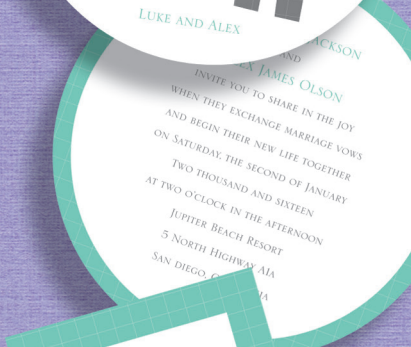
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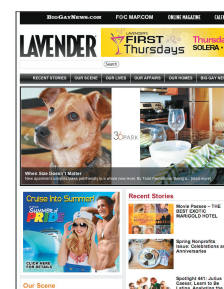
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ON THE COVER

The Wisconsin Point Light signifies both getaways and safe harbor on Minnesota's North Shore of Lake Superior. Photo by Sophia Hantzes

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Tourism 101: Gender, Sexuality, & Getaways

I love fall. It's my favorite time of year. The colors, the temperatures, the smell of bonfires...I tend to travel and experience as much as I can during this short season. When I was thinking about what to include in this issue about Fall Getaways, the first thought that crossed my mind was marriage. Of course. Achieving the legalization of same-sex marriage in Minnesota is something that Lavender might never stop talking about. And, particularly with the overthrow of Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act on a national level, to talk about marriage across the United States is particularly relevant when looking at Fall Getaways. Am I suggesting you go get hitched in another state this fall? Not necessarily, but you have my blessings if you do. What I'm suggesting is that we show our support for these states that have given marriage equality to their citizens by making it a point to showcase them and spend our money there.

What power does this GLBT community wield in terms of whether or not this approach is influential? What power does this magazine in this state have? What power do offices of tourism have? I don't have answers to these questions, but I can tell you that positive reinforcement (with money attached) never hurts. And, in my hopeful heart, if other states see what they're missing out on, perhaps they'll make it more important to work toward legalizing same-sex marriage on a state and national level as well.

As an editor, I have to start with a certain pecking order when approaching people, organizations, companies, or any entity, really. Considering this topic, the states legalized same-sex marriage so I needed to contact the states. Each state has an office of tourism and I gave them the rights of first refusal. If the officials in the office of tourism chose to pass, either I would not include an expanded version of their state's fall getaway offerings or I would approach a city in the state for what they would recommend for GLBT travelers. This way, I knew that I would represent all the states in some fashion—a web address on our website, a city's version of what GLBT travelers can plan to visit, or a state's official recommendations for this community with the full awareness that the state was receiving this attention strictly because the state legalized same-sex marriage.

When I sent the questions for the gay getaways travel feature, I asked not only about fall attractions (since the issue is about Fall Getaways), but also about what would be of interest to the GLBT community, specifically. I gave the example of Harvey Milk areas of interest in San Francisco, the Beekman 1802 Mercantile owned by the Beekman Boys in New York, and almost listed Judy Garland's house in Grand Rapids, but thought that was too easy and obvious (and a little cliché). I sent the questions and was planning to be enlightened by the experts as to what GLBT attractions might be found in their states.

Teach me! Enlighten me! Show me the way!

The responses were a little sparse.

There are various reasons as to why some of the responses were thin. I'm sure that timing had something to do with it as our relentless biweekly schedule means that I'm often asking for things on tight deadlines. Digging a little deeper, states like Massachusetts and New York have already developed extensive GLBT travel websites that feature attractions that are relevant to this community...and to boil things down to a short list might be moot. They're rock stars in this realm. That's giving a pretty hefty benefit of the doubt to the whole list of states, though, and I don't think I'm going to be quite that charitable. I think they just didn't have much to send me. But, instead of framing the lack of GLBT-specific attractions as a deterrent or detraction to visiting these fine states that have legalized same-sex marriage, I will highlight it as a growth opportunity.

I was a Women's Studies Major in 1996, which became Women's & Gender Studies by the time I graduated in 1999, and later became Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies. People often asked (and still ask) why such a concentration of study existed. One of my responses was, because it has only just been written. If women had been part of the documentation of history, math, music, art, geography, science, as well as all the other industries and areas of life, perhaps we wouldn't need a specific concentration of study to catch up on their involvement and achievements. Then, the response was, "but the women weren't there." It's a somewhat valid point in that women were not allowed to do many things based on gender and sex discrimination, but they were always there, much like the GLBT community. Of course, looking at the addition of "Gender" and "Sexuality" to this one department of this one academic institution (my alma mater is Macalester College) does not indicate a worldwide movement or acceptance of women, gender, and sexuality, but it shows that there was a process of figuring out that *something was missing* and *it was very important*.

It is very important.

The tourism industry may be wise to follow suit and expand their own concentrations of study in terms of adding women, gender, and sexuality to how their locations are represented. We can joke about history being about "dead white guys," but we don't have to let that be the case, particularly when the "dead white guys" are put out there as being straight by default. I'm sure "the closet" as a part of the GLBT community's past, present, and future reality has a very real effect on what can be known about locations and potential people of interest for tourists, but that can and should be less and less of a roadblock in rewriting history and pointedly deciding to re-present an underrepresented demographic of people. But, this current movement of rights being expanded to include the GLBT community means that history is happening now. It's happening in their own states. Here is an opportunity for the tourism industry to not only work toward building a body of work that includes GLBT people and dates of the past, but the present as well. Start the process and it will continue to grow into what will draw the community to the borders even more than being a state that has legalized same-sex marriage.

There's a lighthouse on the cover of this issue. A very real trend exists that magazines with people on them are more appealing than those without, but this lighthouse draws me into this issue for various reasons. This issue is about getaways and a lighthouse is something that is often seen "elsewhere," particularly by those of us who are very landlocked. This particular lighthouse, the Wisconsin Point Light, is something that is seen by people who visit the North Shore of Minnesota as well as those who attend Duluth-Superior Pride, which is featured in this issue and happening over Labor Day Weekend. It is there as a safe beacon to sailors, but can also be seen as symbolizing a safe harbor for this community, as can the travel feature in this issue which lights the way to states that made marriage equality a reality for this community.

The other states that have yet to legalize same-sex marriage might not be influenced by this issue. What matters to me most is that you find something worthwhile in it, like I do. Just as I prefer to find services, restaurants, stores, and other products in the pages of this magazine because their presence tells me they value this community, I also prefer to visit places where the rights of this community are making very clear progress.

I want to go where history has been made and continues to be written.

With thanks,

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Border to Border and Coast to Coast and All the Ships at Sea. W. Winchell

I viewed with jubilation the August first marriage celebrations of dozens of Minnesotan same-sex couples. It would be nice to believe the fight's been won for equality, but disturbing news from around the country belie this wish. Not just for same-sex couples, but people of color and different (non-Christian) religions.

Ron McCoy and Chris Bowers flew in to Albuquerque two days after SCOTUS's rulings for that city's GLBT PrideFest. When the shuttle driver spotted them holding hands he said, McCoy told station KRQE, "Okay, if you're going to do that, you're going to the back of the bus."

Back-of-the-bus thinking is alive and well, and not limited to the deep South or Southwest. On August 8, the vandals drew a swastika and wrote, "die n—r," and "Hitler" on the statue of Jackie Robinson outside New York's Brooklyn Cyclones stadium. Robinson made history in 1947, joining the Brooklyn Dodgers as the first African-American in major league baseball.

When Reza Aslan was interviewed on Fox News, concerning his new book, *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*, host Lauren Green could get no further than questioning the suitability of a Mus-

lim to write about things Christian. Aslan came to the United States from Tehran with his family in 1949, holds a BA in religions from Santa Clara University and an MTS from Harvard Divinity School.

We're not perfect here, but we do work to redress wrongs. An Albuquerque airport spokesman declared, "First and foremost, it is absolutely unacceptable... [the driver's employer] acknowledged this was a mistake on the part of the driver." The *Daily News* has offered a reward in the Robinson case, and Aslan's Fox interview went viral on the Internet titled, "The Most Embarrassing Interview You've Seen On Fox News."

Very different from the hate unleashed by Russian President Vladimir Putin through new, draconian laws against GLBT individuals. Gay-bashing is tacitly condoned: A teen was recently tortured and filmed—and later died. If the Winter Olympics are held in Sochi, suspected gays—athletes, supporters, and visitors from around the world will have reason to fear reprisals.

When I get discouraged about our own failures, I remind myself that in the main, we are striving to build up, to better; not tear down. ■



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What a difference a year makes. Last year we were all wearing our VOTE NO shirts and worrying about our future. And look where we are today. What better way to celebrate than with piles of fried food and questionable fashion choices. In celebration of marriage equality, this year's theme color is WHITE - perfect for wiping greasy fingers and collecting barn dust. Plan to enjoy the Fair on your own schedule, but if you're looking for an easy way to join up with your posse and/or meet some new friends, rendezvous at the beer garden at the corner of Carnes and Liggett (near the entrance to the midway) at 3pm.

MANKATO PRIDEFEST

Saturday & Sunday, September 6-7

Riverfront Park • Mankato, MN

"Color Outside The Lines" at South Central Minnesota Pride's 2013 Mankato Pridefest September 6-7! In its 12th year, the weekend celebration will feature activities and events promoting visibility, pride and outreach for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and allied community. The weekend's festivities include karaoke, a parade, a dance and an outdoor festival featuring live music and entertainment at the beautiful Riverfront Park in Mankato. Visit scmnpride.org for more information including a detailed schedule of events, hotel reservations, exhibitor information, directions and maps. □

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Attack of the Best of the Brave New Workshop. Photo by Dani Werner

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Hopefully, this spirited 'Attack' directed by Caleb McEwen will be one of more revues over the next year to mark the region's premiere comedy theater's 55th anniversary. The current revival of vignette selections is mostly from recent years and delightfully reflect recent issues. However, it would be nice to see them dig deeper into the archival vault. McEwen is a first-rate comedy director and it would be a juicy challenge for him to boot.

That said, there is one vignette that surely seems to be from quite a ways back: a commercial spoof about how razor blade manufacturers of two or three decades ago were continually adding blades to their razors in the name of 'a closer shave.' We are made to wonder about what the consequences could be to one's skin and what's below it if you were to add over 30 blades to a single razor. I don't know how younger audiences may feel about it but I thought it was hilarious.

As for recent mischief, there's Matt Erkel as Minnesota Vikings owner, Zygi Wilf, brightly portrayed as a man out to bilk the taxpaying public to build his stadium. A skit on gay divorce has an adorable Tom Reed and Andy Hilbrands as a lovey-dovey gay couple horrified that an angry lesbian couple (a prickly Taj Ruler and Lauren Anderson) are at each other's throat and are splitting up. It's a savvy scene that raises speculation about what we might expect to be dealing with

in the next wave of GLBT equality issues.

But the ladies outdo themselves in a hysterically funny segment where they play not characters who wear sweatpants and yoga pants, but who are a pair of sweatpants (Anderson) and a pair of yoga pants (Ruler). Yoga pants's lack of modesty and mystique perturbs Sweatpants immensely. But things get worse when she finds it's not the 1990s anymore and that it's not only mothers who are wearing tight-fitting yoga pants, but their little daughters are too. It's the outrage about the sexualizing of young girls with skimpy clothing, marketed as something one oughtn't even be concerned about. Yes, it's terribly funny but it also says something about our consumer-driven-at-all-costs economic system. It's also a terrific portrayal of women of different generations who are at odds with differing values.

CHURCH BASEMENT LADIES: THE LAST (POTLUCK) SUPPER

Ongoing

Plymouth Playhouse at the Best Western Kelly Inn, 2705 Annapolis Ln., Plymouth (763) 553-1600 x 1 www.plymouthplayhouse.com

The fifth installment of the beloved musical stage comedy series is a sure bet. Playwright Greta Grosch has written the script based on the books of Janet Letnes Martin and Suzann Nelson. Grosch, also a great comedian and comic actress in her own right, has a gift for not only writing funny comedy but for infusing it with a deep sense of humanity. The women you've loved in previous episodes are back. The incomparable Janet Paone returns as Widow Snustad who this time around has to deal with the reality that change is something that happens whether we like it or not.

Composer-lyricist Drew Jansen who recently triumphed with *The Geriatric Theatre* shares that with the *Church Basement* series "all five episodes involve in some way the notion of 'change'. In this case, the big change is that the church is closing down due to declining membership. The task here was to somehow find the funny amid the sad, while still respecting the emotions of those in the audience who have experienced something similar. The closing of long-standing rural churches, I've come to find, is almost epidemic these days. So this show digs a little deeper emotionally than the other four, and I think the payoff at the end is much greater because of it. Yes, the church does close but there 's a whole lotta other stuff going on at the end that calls for celebrating and rejoicing, even in the midst of the turmoil and sadness."



Church Basement Ladies: The Last (Potluck) Supper. Photo by John Connelly

MINNESOTA AND THE CIVIL WAR & THE US DAKOTA WAR OF 1862

Through Sept. 8

Minnesota History Center, 345 Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul
(651) 259-3000

www.minnesotahistorycenter.org

These two haunting exhibits absorb the visitor into dark chapters of American and Minnesota history. A photograph of the fabled First Minnesota regiment flag and veterans of the First Minnesota Artillery Battery photographed three decades after the war's end tilt us into the anguished world of American life of that time. It's all simple but grippingly powerful. Notice how with the Wheeler & Wilson sewing machine with stirrup foot-pedals you would move your fabric from side to side rather than back and forth. Surely this would have suited quilts, like the various ones on display, or the black mourning dress worn by Anoka County's Lucy Downs which she began wearing continually halfway through the war.

You'll see the drummer boy fife that belonged to Minnesotan Albert Woolson, the last surviving Union soldier. His life was noted by President Dwight Eisenhower when he passed away in 1956 at 108. Uniforms and the prisoner garb worn by those interred at Georgia's notorious Andersonville site are seen along with bugles, guns, and crude surgical kit instruments: forceps, a scalpel, suture needles, and brass scarificators.

Most wrenching of all are the letters written by young Minnesota soldiers. Voiceovers of their correspondences compliment a gauzy scrim with photograph projections of the war. On the other side of the scrim is a re-created ground section of a desolate battlefield cryptically adorned with a knapsack, cap, uniform, and timepiece. One letter voiced over relates how explosions tear men and horses to pieces. We don't need to see it to realize the horror, the speaking of it is enough.

Where the Civil War exhibit space exudes grays and reds, the Dakota War space right next to it is a brightly contrasting yellow. The paradox is that what it relates is just as bleak and

bloody. It's as if to shine light on a pivotal event that few people still know little about, even in Minnesota.

The US-Dakota War of August and September, 1862 ruptured southern Minnesota. In this case the US government's chronic Indian treaty-breaking reached a tipping point. President Lincoln ignored envoy George E. Day's reports of rampant corruption and agreed upon annuity payments were not paid to the Dakota. To worsen matters, government agents and traders refused to release provisions. It was a year when game was scarce and Indians were starving. When four young Dakota men killed five settlers near Acton, the war began. Both sides committed great bloodshed and atrocities. The number of Dakotas killed is not known. 400 to 600 white civilians and soldiers died.

The Dakota lost the war and on Dec. 26, 1862, 38 Dakota men were hanged in the largest mass execution in US history. Lincoln gave 264 other Dakota men prison sentences - commuting their death sentences. Territorial Governor Alexander Ramsey called for Minnesota's Sioux to be exterminated and was ultimately cleared of charges of treaty fraud. Punitive expeditions were enacted over the next few years and Dakota were incarcerated at Fort Snelling. The monumental irony of all this is that this was during the same time that the same nation and Minnesota troops were fighting the Civil War, which was judgment on the part of the Union against the expansion of slavery of another nonwhite race.

The Dakota exhibit is filled with informative placards, short visual presentations, and weapons like bayonet, double-barrel shotgun, various rifles, and colt revolver. A copy of an engraving of the hanging is rather jolting, especially when you find out that it was imperiously used for advertising by Mankato's Standard Brewing Co. In bold

contrast, displayed also is an evocative spiritual painting by Lyle Miller. The hope is that healing is possible. These two exhibits are powerhouses that reflect attitudes we still have embedded in the American and Minnesota character a century and a half later. It's also a call, not to arms, but to forgiveness.

SINCERELY YOURS, CARL E

Through Oct. 6

The Ledge Gallery,

1916 Third Av. S., Mpls.

www.theledgempls.com

Artists in Storefronts organizer Joan Vorderbruggen has her own exhibition as a part of the project. It pays homage to a man she met and befriended - the elderly Carl E. Friberg who became diagnosed with an aortic aneurysm. After she moved away he wrote her letters about his observations, his past, his hopes, and current day events. Vorderbruggen shares, "I've held onto this very lopsided cardboard box packed with letters from Carl for so long it's become a story within a story. Moving from one coast to the other, and a thousand places in-between, always traveling with this box for a decade now. What has revealed itself to be so magical as I read and reread all the thoughts he was sharing with me in those letters is the fact that it's in his own peculiar and beautiful hand. When his pain had worsened his penmanship did too - when he was day-dreaming and tangential there were more scribbles. I can very literally glean so much more information because it's tangible and one-of-a-kind. Holding the actual papers with the ink that came from the pen in his hand will forever be my best treasure. Spending dozens of hours hand-embroidering these touching letters makes that experience even more divine, every word taking on a spark as I slowly enjoy creating in what feels like his true presence." ■

LEANER & MEANER: A Q&A WITH THE “QUEEN OF MEAN”

She's referred to as “edgy.”

Her website address is www.insultcomic.com.

She's leaner and meaner...and she's coming to town August 31.

Here's Lisa Lampanelli answering questions from our readers (the uncensored version is available at www.lavendermagazine.com). Make sure to get tickets to see her in *The Leaner & Meaner Tour* on August 31 at Mystic Lake.

Minnesota now has legal same-sex marriage as of August 1, 2013. What marital advice would you give to same-sex newlyweds?

I would say that marriage is difficult, so just do what straight people do: cheat on their spouses and adopt unfair-fighting practices. It seems to work for us.

The new tour is “Leaner and Meaner.” Weight loss changes your wardrobe--what did you do with all your great dresses?

My great dresses are in my mother's cedar closet at her home. I'm keeping them in case I gain my weight back or if I get famous enough to have a museum erected in my honor.

Has your entire routine and jokes changed with your weight?

Now that I lost weight, I'm hungry. And the hungrier I am, the angrier I am, and the funnier I am. So it's basically a win-win situation for everyone involved.

Have you ever had any serious backlash from the racial jokes you use in your routines? Or have the audiences always been receptive to them?

The audience is usually very receptive to my jokes – including the ones about races and sexual preferences – but sometimes people who aren't familiar with my comedy don't get me. And to them I say: “Get with the program, &*&\$!”

You started as a journalist, and went to grad school at Harvard. Why did you find it necessary to resort to a crude, stereotypically Italian, New Yorker accent and word choice for comedy when you probably have a bigger vocabulary and were more educated than most of your comedic counterparts and could have made a serious mark in witty, intelligent comedy?

This is a two-part answer: A) For the same reason Norman Lear created the character of Archie Bunker; B) Go punch yourself in the &%\$&, passive-aggressive @%^&\$@.

Lisa Lampanelli in “The Leaner & Meaner Tour” at Mystic Lake Casino Hotel

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Del-Bar, photo courtesy of Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau

Continued on page 22 ➔

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We reached out to several of the area's top chefs to find out where they like to go when they get out of the kitchen and hit the open road.

Michael DeCamp, the Chef de Cuisine at La Belle Vie, creates some of the most beautiful, elegant cuisine to be found in the Twin Cities. His inventive dishes are always served with a gasp and an appreciative sigh. There's a reason this restaurant is a perennial best-of. On the rare occasion that he takes a vacation, he has but one destination on the brain: Wisconsin.

Del-Bar in Wisconsin Dells is a family owned steakhouse that was established in 1943. The sleek building expansion (from the original log cabin) was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright protégée James Dresser. The maroon bar seats have a sexy curve and the sort of chairs you can settle into for a good long drink. They serve dinner daily and the dish not to miss is one of their perfectly prepared steaks. Pair it with a brandy Manhattan and it's a taste of another era.

Another throw-back spot DeCamp can't miss in a Wisconsin sojourn is Ellie's Ice Cream in Amery, an old-fashioned ice cream shop. The counter is framed by red-topped stools which are wrapped in chrome. There are no fancy flourishes of new-fangled flavors, just get a double scoop of classic flavors made from rich, Wisconsin cream.

For a more modern taste of the good life, he's also a fan of the Rumpus Room in Milwaukee. A part of the Bartolotta group of restaurants, the sleek bar has an extensive beer list and the menu is a meat-lovers' paradise.

A trip through Wisconsin isn't complete without a proper dive bar experience. For that, DeCamp heads to Superior's Anchor Bar. It's dark, dingy, and cheap; a maritime hoarder's delight. And, it serves some of the best burgers to be found.

Erica Strait, proprietress and chef of Foxy Falafel in St. Paul, has

a different agenda when road tripping. Strait doesn't eat gluten, so that makes her choices just a little more challenging. Often when traveling she seeks out local co-ops to find local, seasonal produce and artisan food treats. She loves a good supper club where she can get a slab of prime rib (a girl can't live on kale alone).

When tooling through northern Minnesota, she always makes a point to stop at Gordy's Hi-Hat in Cloquet. Their freshly ground hamburgers are gently packed together, making for a tender, meaty treat. They also have fabulous freshly made fries and onion rings. To go for the full drive-in experience, it's wise to also order one of their ice cream shakes. Delicious!

For a more formal experience, she'll hit the New Scenic Café up the North Shore on Highway 61. As we learned when we visited (Lav Issue 462), no one else does seasonal cooking like they do. No one bakes a better berry pie than these guys.

Strait also loves a Wisconsin trip, especially one that ends at the brick-and-mortar home of her food truck sisters who run the Chef Shack. Their Bay City location is open on the weekend in the summer. It's a lovely location for a pizza dinner from their wood fired, outdoor oven or an epic brunch.

And on the way home from any road trip, she makes a point to stop at Dairy Queen.

Chef JD Fratzke makes a sexy plate of food. He cooks his heart out over at the much-lauded Strip Club Meat and Fish in St. Paul. A vocal proponent of farmer partnerships, he loves to travel home to Winona. When he can get down there with his girls (his lovely wife is also a server at the restaurant and the two have a daughter) they camp out at The Blue Heron. Inside they share his passion of local cooking and utilizing the abundance of this part of the state.



(Clockwise from left) Must-have berry pie at New Scenic Café, photo by Andy Lien; Oysters so fresh you can hear the ocean at Chef Shack, photo by Stephanie A. Meyer; Lobster at Del-Bar, photo courtesy of Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau; The Rumpus Room interior, photo courtesy of The Bartolotta Restaurants.



Continued on page 24 ➔



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(Clockwise from left) Aging cheese, photo courtesy of iStockphoto; Cheeseburger at Gordy's Hi-Hat, photo by Joy Summers; Beno's Deli, photo by Cynthia Porter; Blue Heron Coffeehouse, photo by Cynthia Porter.



They also love to stop by Beno's Deli for a bowl of their fabulous soup.

Perhaps the best versed in road tripping are Daniel Klein and Mirra Fine, the globe-trekking duo behind the Perennial Plate. Klein is a chef who has worked around the globe. The two began filming their wildly successful web series with a year of eating locally in Minnesota and are now traveling the world documenting their food experiences. For these two, it all comes back to cheese.

They met at a cheese shop (France 44) and recently became engaged in a cheese cave in Italy, surrounded by massive wheels of Parmesan. As Klein told me, "A good food trip is inevitably based around that same subject. Although I'm mildly lactose intolerant (isn't everybody?), a good cheese tour is totally worth it."

He suggests a trifecta of Southern Wisconsin cheese makers. Our favorite trifecta of cheese makers, or triangle of cheese mak-

ers, are Uplands, Bleu Mont, and Hook's.

"Uplands are the perfectionists," he enthuses. "They only use milk from their own cows when they are on grass (they sell it the rest of the year) and the owners are extremely kind and knowledgeable. Just make sure to call ahead, they don't do walk-ins."

"Bleu Mont is the rebel cheese maker. Will Lehner experiments to much success. You'll have to convince him of a tour, but he built his own cave in the side of the hill he lives on. Usually a 'cave' is just a glorified refrigerator, this is a real cave. His bandaged rap cheddar is unbelievably delicious."

"Hook's is more old-school Wisconsin. Located in downtown Mineral Point, this is a place where you can taste what 15 year old vacuumed sealed cheddar tastes like (brings sharp to a new level)."

That's it. Grab the keys. Gas up the car. Crank the tunes. It's time for an epic feast of a road trip. ◻

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(Clockwise from left) Castro at Night; Cupid's Span; California Street Cable Cars. San Francisco Travel Association photos.

California

By San Francisco Travel, www.sanfrancisco.travel

Always at the top of the list as one of the best cities to visit in the world, San Francisco is best known for its scenic beauty, cultural attractions, diverse communities, and world-class cuisine. Measuring 49 square miles, this walk-able city includes landmarks like the Golden Gate Bridge, cable cars, Alcatraz, and the largest Chinatown in the United States. A stroll of the city's streets can lead from the Castro to North Beach to Fisherman's Wharf, with intriguing neighborhoods to explore. Views of the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay are often laced with fog, creating a romantic mood in this most European of American cities.

FALL FEATURES

The Golden Gate Bridge, the most famous bridge in the world, manages to impress even the most experienced travelers with its stunning 1.7-mile span. The warm, clear days of fall are a perfect time to explore this world famous icon. Approximately 120,000 automobiles drive across it every day. A pedestrian walkway also allows the crossing on foot, and bikes are allowed on the western side. The Golden Gate Bridge is said to be one of the most photographed things on Earth and now features new 3,500-square-foot Bridge Pavilion to welcome visitors, house celebratory merchandise, and display interpretive exhibits. The iconic Round House has been converted to a space for visitor and education programs plus a "green screen" photo area where visitors can picture themselves in locations not accessible to the general public such as the top of the tower or climbing the cables. www.goldengatebridge.org


Inspired by the 75th anniversary of the Bay Bridge in 2011, **The Bay Lights** is a fine art piece installed on the western span and viewable from San Francisco and points north (but not by drivers crossing the bridge). Measuring 1.8-miles long and 500-feet high, the high-tech light sculpture design features 25,000 individually programmable, energy-efficient LED lights mounted on the bridge's vertical cables. The Bay Lights will remain on the bridge for two years and is projected to add \$97 million to the local economy. Installation of the lights began in October 2012 by internationally acclaimed artist Leo Villareal and was completed in March 2013. The world's largest LED sculpture is on display daily from dusk to 2am daily. www.thebaylights.org.

The **Walt Disney Family Museum** presents the exhibition *Water to Paper, Paint to Sky: The Art of Tyrus Wong* on through Feb. 3, 2014. The exhibition focuses on the life and work of Chinese-American artist Tyrus Wong—a celebrated painter, muralist, kite maker, lithographer, Hollywood sketch artist, calligrapher, ceramicist, and Disney Legend. This retrospective features more than 150 works including paintings, sculptures, works on paper, painted scarves, kites, and more. Although he never met Walt Disney, it was the ethereal beauty of Wong's Eastern influenced paintings that caught Disney's eye and became the inspiration for the animated feature *Bambi*, which changed the way animation art was presented. www.waltdisney.org

GLBT ATTRACTIONS

Often referred to as San Francisco's "queer Smithsonian," the GLBT Historical Society houses one of the world's largest collections of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender historical materials. The society's **GLBT History Museum** is the first full-scale, stand-alone museum of its kind in the United States. www.glbthistory.org.

San Francisco's beautiful **City Hall** is a landmark for the LGBT community. It was here in 2004 that then-Mayor Gavin Newsom first legalized same-sex marriages. Through the legal ups and downs, San Francisco has been a beloved location for weddings, commitment ceremonies and honeymoons ever since. Come for the Beaux Arts architecture, to commit to your love, or to feel the glow as couples, gay and straight, take their wedding vows beneath the towering rotunda. www.sfgov.org

The Castro, known at the "gay capital of the world," offers exciting nightlife, pedestrian-friendly streets, Victorian homes, an array of trendy stores, and outdoor cafes for the "see and scene" crowd. Take a trip back in gay history at the legendary **Castro Theatre** movie palace. This iconic spot houses smaller, independent flicks and is just as active now as it was in the 1920s. www.castrotheatre.com 

There's something about a state with legal same-sex marriage that just makes me want to visit it and spend my money there. Now that Minnesota has joined the honor roll, it's a fine time for Lavender to highlight all of the states where same-sex marriage is legal. You can plan a vacation or a wedding—your pick. At this time in history, the growing list of states includes: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Washington D.C. We highlighted nine of them here; go to www.lavendermagazine.com for links to the rest...and get getting-away!



Connecticut

Enjoy the Calm Atmosphere of Mystic Seaport. Photo courtesy of the Connecticut Office of Tourism. New England Fall Foliage. Photo courtesy of iStockphoto.

By the Connecticut Office of Tourism, www.ctvisit.com

Connecticut is a beautiful destination any time of the year, but in autumn, it's the crown jewel of New England fall foliage. Its charming colonial towns and picturesque natural wonders are enhanced by fall's colors, making for memorable experiences no matter what you have planned. Go antiquing, stroll through a seaside village, or sip wine overlooking one of our beautiful vineyards. Whether you're looking to visit a local farm or a world-class casino, peruse classic art at a museum, or hike through the hills, fall is the perfect time to find inspiration and hidden gems in Connecticut.

FALL FEATURES


The **Connecticut Wine Trail** is a group of 25 charming vineyards divided into western and eastern sections. Connecticut-produced wines have won hundreds of awards and medals and include varieties such as Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Merlot, and Cabernet Franc. Vineyards of note include Sunset Meadow Vineyards, which offers year-round wine tasting, and Haight-Brown Vineyard, where you can sample delicious artisan cheeses and other foods with your wine at HB Café. For those of you who prefer drinks of the hopper variety, check out Thomas Hooker Brewery in Bloomfield, where you can tour the factory and sample 11 unique beers. www.ctwine.com

Don't miss out on one of Connecticut's most charming facets, our **Cozy Bed & Breakfasts**. You won't find friendly service, comfort, charm, or home cooking of this caliber anywhere else! Visit lovely ends like Inn at Stonington, Old Mystic Inn or Cornucopia at Oldfield Bed and Breakfast. A true gem is Butternut Farm Bed & Breakfast, an adorable cottage-style inn replete with 18th century antiques, its grounds are home to dairy goats, pheasants, chickens, and housecats. Search for your B&B at www.ctvisit.com.

Connecticut is home to the nation's leading maritime museum, **Mystic Seaport**. If you're a history buff or just a casual admirer of Connecticut's storied past, you'll love the working preservation shipyard, huge photography collection, and brisk sea air at Mystic Seaport. There are events going on all season, like twilight cruises, beer tastings, and Halloween fun all through October. Afterwards, take a walk through the seaside town of Mystic, home to many cute cafes and shops. www.mysticseaport.org

GLBT ATTRACTIONS

Connecticut has several community GLBT Centers, such as the Triangle Community Center and the New Haven Pride Center. Additionally, the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective is holding their annual OneBigEvent—Connecticut's premier GLBT gala—this October!

Triangle Community Center: www.ctgay.org. New Haven Pride Center: www.nhglcc.org. Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective: www.hglhc.org 





Iowa

By Iowa Tourism, www.traveliowa.com

Iowa welcomes all travelers to enjoy our diverse destinations. The only state bordered by two National Scenic Byways, The Great River Road on the east and the Loess Hills National Scenic Byway on the west, means Iowa enchants visitors with autumn beauty from border to border. Take in the colors on a hike through a park, pick a pumpkin at your favorite patch, or share scary stories at an historic hotel. Just a short drive from Minneapolis, Iowa is a quick and affordable weekend destination.


FALL FEATURES

The Villages of Van Buren are made up of a small cluster of villages in southeast Iowa. Drive through the countryside, picnic in a park, hike the trails, stroll through the shops, enjoy the historic architecture, paddle the Des Moines River Water Trail, or relax and take in the solitude. In the fall, Lacey Keosauqua State Park is especially picturesque. Bordering the great "horseshoe bend" of the Des Moines River, the park is one of the largest in the state and welcome visitors with the quiet beauty of the flowers, shrubs, timber and plenty of hiking trails. www.villagesofvanburen.com

Fall and ghosts go hand-in-hand. **The Villisca Ax Murder House** is the site of one of the grizzliest murders in American history. On July 10, 1912, someone bludgeoned to death Josiah and Sara Moore, their four children, and two children who were spending the night. To this day the murder is unsolved and the home has become a popular destination for lovers of the paranormal. The home has been restored to its 1912 appearance and is open to visitors, the bravest of whom may make reservations to spend the night in this home that some people say is haunted. www.villiscaiaowa.com/history.php

Living Loess (rhymes with "bus") includes nine artisan attractions located within 20 miles of each other nestled in the Loess Hills in Pottawattamie and Harrison counties in western Iowa. They include: Garden Grove Eatery, Gallaher Designs, Harrison County Historical Village and Welcome Center, Harvest Studio, Hitchcock Nature Center, Honey Creek Creamery, Loess Hills Lavender Farm, Loess Hills Woodworks, Sawmill Hollow Family Farm, and Sawmill Hollow which is the nation's first aronia berry farm. The North American Aronia Berry Festival is the third weekend in September. Also in the area, Honey Creek Farms is situated in a renovated historic bunkhouse on a century farm where artisan cheese is crafted using fresh goat's milk. www.livingloess.com

GLBT ATTRACTIONS

The Hotel Blackhawk in Davenport, Iowa, is a beautifully restored historic property and the only in Iowa that is a member of IGLTA and TAG-approved. The property offers a special "Pride Package" that includes accommodations, bowling, spa credit, drink certificates and a bottle of champagne. The hotel sells about 100 Pride Packages to couples from the Minneapolis area each month. www.hotelblackhawk.com/pride/ 

(Clockwise from left) Loess Hills, photo by Erich Ernst; Hotel Blackhawk, photo by Alisha O'Brien Photography; Bentonsport (Villages of Van Buren), photo by Phil Augustavo; Autumn River Scene, photo courtesy of iStockphoto.



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Photo: lauren b. photography



(Clockwise from left) Ogunquit Playhouse, photo by Robert Dennis; Miranda Havalotti Cooking Lobsters, photo by Cynthia Farr-Weinfeld; Foliage at Sugarloaf Golf Course, photo courtesy of Maine Office of Tourism.

Maine

By the Maine Office of Tourism, www.visitmaine.com

Maine's renowned National Parks (including Acadia), dramatic rocky shorelines, majestic mountains, and sandy beaches combine with picturesque towns, notable cuisine, and cultural attractions to offer a unique vacation. With the crisp autumn air comes the chance to experience a quintessential fall weekend. Glorious colors are on display state-wide. From quiet coastal villages and lakeside golf courses to scenic mountain passes, Maine offers a variety of settings for nature's brilliant show. Maine's official Fall Foliage website has updates on leaf conditions, with recommended hikes and drives (www.maine.gov/doc/foliage/). Another fall favorite is heading to an orchard for apple picking and a glass of fresh-pressed cider.

FALL FEATURES

Maine has inspired many of the nation's most renowned artists from Frederic Edwin Church and Georgia O'Keeffe, to Winslow Homer and three generations of the Wyeth family. Fall is perfect for exploring the 167-mile-long **Maine Art Museum Trail** that joins seven of the most outstanding museums including the Ogunquit Museum of American Art, the Bowdoin College Museum of Art (Brunswick), the Colby College Museum of Art with new Lunder Wing of American Masterworks (Waterville), and the Farnsworth Art Museum (Rockland). And Winslow Homer's famed Studio may now be visited on guided tour (Scarborough). Details can be downloaded at www.VisitMaine.com.


Maine's fall fairs have something for everyone. Local cuisine is sampled at Harvest Fest & Chowder Cook-off in Bethel (September), ChiliFest in Wells (September), Salmon Festival in Eastport (September), Common Ground Country Fair in Unity (September), Apple Festival in Rangeley Lakes (October), or Acadia's Oktoberfest on Mount Desert Island (October). Maine-made crafts are found at Country Roads Artists & Artisans Tour (September), Fall Festival Arts & Crafts Show in Camden (September), Caribou Fall Arts & Crafts Festival (October). Maine history, music and culture are enjoyed at WoodenBoat Sail-In in Brooklin (September), Ogunquit's Antique Show & Sale (September), Tea and Popovers at Acadia National Park (October), and Living History Days in Leonard's Mill (October).

Over 400 treasure-filled **antique shops** dot Maine's scenic highways and byways, making Maine a favorite destination for antique-seekers. The trails are loose centers or "loops" which feature a bounty of antique shops and dealers. Try more than one trail, combine parts of each, or explore beyond them. U.S. Route 1 from the town of York (which is in itself an antique, as America's oldest chartered city) through Ogunquit, Wells, and Kennebunkport to Arundel boasts the largest concentration of antique shops in Maine, within just 30 miles. For more information, visit the Maine Antique Dealers Association at www.maineantiques.org.

GLBT ATTRACTIONS

Ogunquit on Maine's southern coast is a friendly resort and artist colony that has been welcoming GLBT visitors for more than 100 years. Featuring three miles of white sandy beaches, its Fall offerings include beautiful foliage, lively dance clubs, shopping, antiquing, restaurants and lobster pounds, the 80-year-old Ogunquit Theater showing *West Side Story* (September) and *The Buddy Holly Story* (October), the Lobster Dash race (September), 1780 Heritage Museum, and famed Marginal Way—once an old Indian trail, now a meandering path hugging the ocean for 1.25 miles with some of the best views, flora and fauna along Maine's coastline. www.gayogunquit.com

Mainestreet Ogunquit is one of New England's largest gay entertainment complexes, and strives to be the standard in which others are judged. Besides being one of the region's top dance, Mainestreet has featured a variety of shows from plays to drag to comedy. Favorite events are Top 40 dancing, karaoke, and killer women's tea dances, and summer nights are best on our outdoor deck. Mainestreet remains open all year, and is referred to as "Ogunquit's Party Central." www.mainestreetogunquit.com

Highly popular with the gay community, **Nosh Kitchen Bar** is a casual, urban-style eatery located in Portland's downtown Arts District along trendy Congress Street. The restaurant offers a creative perspective on traditional deli techniques, based on the use of local, fresh, all-natural, and sustainable ingredients. Favorite classic sandwiches receive an inventive twist with meats that are butchered, brined, and roasted "in house" and served on bread that is locally baked. Open for lunch, dinner, and well into the night, Nosh is a particular favorite for cocktails and after local bar-hopping. www.noshkitchenbar.com 



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(Clockwise from left) Potomac Forest; Maritime Museum; Wednesday Night Sail Boat Races; Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. Photos courtesy of Maryland Office of Tourism.

Maryland

By the Maryland Office of Tourism, www.visitmaryland.org

Maryland invites visitors to explore out-of-the-ordinary destinations that aren't out of the way. Enjoy the excitement of a journey through the state's five regions, traveling from serene oceanfront hideaways and Chesapeake Bay villages to wonderfully vibrant Main Streets and majestic mountainscapes. Be inspired by our beautiful countryside, set out on a leisurely drive along a network of Civil War Trails, tour local vineyards and craft breweries, or pause in Baltimore at the birthplace of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Pick from an extensive schedule of cultural events and delight in our culinary specialties, including seafood fresh from the Chesapeake Bay.

FALL FEATURES

Maryland's largest city is **Baltimore**, known to many as Charm City. Fall brings cooler temperatures, but our attractions have turned up the heat with brand-new exhibits and events. A sampling includes: The National Aquarium in Baltimore made a big splash by opening a \$12.5 million Blacktip Reef, filled with 20 sharks and Calypso, a 500+ pound green sea turtle. Mummies of the World, both human and animal, will appear at the Maryland Science Center beginning September 28, 2013. African-American's role in pop culture and comic books is explored at Geppi's Entertainment Museum through March 2014. www.baltimore.org/lgbt-baltimore

Adventure lovers and leaf-peepers head to **Mountain Maryland** in the fall. Activities such as hiking, mountain biking, driving gently winding scenic routes, ziplining, steam locomotive rides, and pedaling along the C&O Canal or the Great Allegheny Passage are just a few choices for visitors to the Deep Creek Lake and greater Cumberland areas. Lodging ranges from a lakeside casino hotel to cozy bed and breakfasts to vacation rental chalets that sleep up to 24 people. Seasonal events include a ten-day Autumn Glory Festival, dirt-track racing at The Rock, or two weekends of open houses at local artist studios.

Annapolis is known as the sailing capital of the world, in part for the two huge boat shows that fill the docks. Now in its 42nd year, the United States Powerboat Show, October 3-6, 2013, attracts over 40,000 attendees. The show, the nation's oldest and largest in-water powerboat exhibition, will precede the United States Sailboat Show, October 10-14, 2013. But anytime of the year, visitors can visit the US Naval Academy to learn about plebe induction, Navy football, and naval heroes such as Admiral John Paul Jones. Don't miss the museum which houses intricate ship models and trinkets carved by sailors from soup bones. www.visitannapolis.org □





Minnesota

By Explore Minnesota Tourism, www.exploreminnesota.com

Fall is a peak time to explore Minnesota's back roads, lakes and rivers, see the splendor of fall foliage, savor home-grown products at harvest time, sample local beer and wine, or attend a seasonal festival. A bounty of options will get you out in the country, whether you're looking for a day trip getaway or romantic weekend for two. Or tour the Twin Cities for Broadway shows, world-class art museums, shopping and fine dining combined with the natural beauty of area lakes and Mississippi River to create an unparalleled metropolitan experience.

FALL FEATURES

The **North Shore of Lake Superior** gives great color and lake views and is very popular with fall color fans. Along Highway 61 from Duluth to Grand Portage, visitors can find several state parks with wilderness rivers, waterfalls, hiking trails, and scenic overlooks. Yellow aspen and birch along shoreline, with scarlet maples inland, line the forest roads. This has been designated as an "All American Drive," one of only 15 routes in the country so noted for their outstanding scenery. For an inland view, take Hwy. 1 through the colors of the Superior National Forest to Ely.

Charming rivertowns and wooded bluffs are found on the **Great River Road** (Highway 61) along the Mississippi between Red Wing and LaCrescent. Steep hillsides dressed in brilliant autumn hues of red, russet and gold. Several scenic overlooks, including those at Frontenac and Great River Bluffs state parks. Several roadside apple stands. This is a popular fall drive, so book your stay ahead of time. Red Wing is one of many towns along the Great River Road that offer an outstanding collection of architectural treasures and spectacular views of the Mississippi River from scenic bluffs. Take a tour of the town by trolley car, shop in the restored Red Wing Pottery Factory, and have lunch in the historic St. James Hotel.

Few major cities can boast such beautiful drives for **Twin Cities Touring**, especially pretty in the fall. Circle Lake of the Isles, Calhoun, Harriet and Nokomis lakes, and visit Minnehaha Falls. They're all along the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway. The Lake Street and Ford Parkway bridges have great views of the Mississippi bordered by colorful, wooded hillsides. St. Paul's tree-lined Summit Avenue is bordered by stately homes. □



(Clockwise from left) A Fall Day at Stony Run Woods; Sea Kayaking on Lake Superior; Golden Leaves around Lake Harriet; Grand Marais on the North Shore. © Explore Minnesota Photos.



(Clockwise from left) NHDTTD/Dale Lary- Perch Pond in Campton; NHDTTD/Debbie Hill- Conway Scenic Railroad's Crawford Station; NHDTTD/Ellen Edersheim- Vegetable Stand, Campton Farm.

New Hampshire

By the State of New Hampshire Division of Travel and Tourism Development, www.visitnh.gov

From Hampton Beach to Lake Winnepesaukee and Mt. Monadnock to Mt. Washington, our great outdoors are the perfect place to getaway and relax this fall. Covered bridges, grand hotels, and quaint inns and B&Bs all make for the essential New Hampshire experience. Walk our main streets in places like Manchester, Portsmouth, and Keene. Try tax-free shopping at our outlet malls, boutique shops, and marketplaces. Enjoy incredible fall foliage on foot, in a car, overhead in a hot air balloon, or on one of our five scenic trains. Farmers markets, pick your own, festivals, and fairs will fill your days and nights. New Hampshire's tourism website changes seasonally to include fall photography and website color-schemes at www.visitnh.gov. Starting in September, we include links on our home page to seasonal itineraries for fall, a link to our fall foliage tracker (an interactive map that allows you to see projected levels of peak by date and area of the state), as well as providing an option to sign up for text alerts with scenic drives. We also do a weekly foliage report through the fall season and have an app in both the Google Play store and on iTunes called the **NH Foliage Tracker App**.

FALL FEATURES


The 34.5 miles of Route 112 in the **White Mountains**, also known as the **Kancamagus Highway** between Lincoln and Conway, New Hampshire provides some of the most spectacular foliage in the country. Scenic overlooks provide stunning views of reds, yellows, and oranges. Just a short hike off the beaten path is a sparkling waterfall. Enjoy views of the White Mountain National Forest and get back to nature.

The Keene Pumpkin Festival in October is known worldwide for its attempts to break the world record for most lit pumpkins in one place at the same time and has succeeded with eight world records. The last time was in 2003 with 28,952 lit pumpkins. Last year, the Property Brothers from HGTV filmed a program during the festival called "Pumpkin Wars" with one brother in New Hampshire and the other in Illinois to see which festival could get more lit pumpkins. While in Keene at the festival, visitors can enjoy food, music, crafts, a costume parade, and pumpkin bowling. www.pumpkinfestival2011.org

Enjoy the **Deerfield Fair** in Deerfield, New Hampshire, on September 26, 27, 28 & 29, 2013. With 137 years of Agricultural Family Fun, this fair is New England's Oldest "Family Fair." See all the classic fair events like tractor pulls, 4H competitions, horse pulls, sheep and cattle judging, along with entertainment ranging from magicians, puppet shows, and square dancers to a circus and the Miss Deerfield Fair Pageant! www.deerfieldfair.com

GLBT ATTRACTIONS

The Highlands Inn in Bethlehem, New Hampshire, has been called "one of the most romantic lesbian destinations on the planet" by Planet Out and has received the Pink Choice Award every year since 2007. It is an 18-room women's resort on a hundred private acres in New Hampshire's White Mountains. The property includes three buildings: the Main Inn with 12 rooms, the Farmhouse with 5 rooms, and the rustic Cottage. With large common areas, including a cozy living room with a cheery fireplace, and antiques and fresh flowers throughout, this lesbian-owned-and-run inn will remind you of a Victorian country home. www.highlandsinn-nh.com

The Notchland Inn in Hart's Location, New Hampshire, has been owned by Ed Butler and his husband, Les Schoof, for more than 20 years. Surrounded by well-kept gardens dotted with purple lupine flowers and looking out on the green forested mountains, the inn provides its visitors an idyllic setting. The Inn hosts weddings and honeymoons and even has an in-house Justice of the Peace. www.notchland.com. 



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(Clockwise from left) Horse Carriage; Pumpkin Patch; Ontario County. Photos courtesy of New York State Tourism.

New York

By New York State Tourism, www.iloveny.com

New York State features 11 beautiful vacation regions. New York's attractions span from landmarks such as Niagara Falls to the wine trails of Hudson Valley & Finger Lakes and treasures like the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. In fall, visitors can engage in refreshing outdoor activities to admire the changing colors or they can stop by any of New York's abundant farmers markets to feast on its fresh fruits and vegetables, unique apple ciders and award-winning wines. All throughout the season the Empire State has activities tailored for every visitor.

FALL FEATURES

This fall season, visitors throughout New York can explore delicious food and beverage "trails" to discover what great new restaurant chefs have already found out: nothing beats hand-crafted, local food and beverages. **The Culinary Institute of America Food Enthusiast Classes**, in conjunction with Farm Fresh Tours, offer the opportunity to spend a day with celebrated chefs to learn how to turn fresh ingredients into mouthwatering dishes. Between September 15 and October 13, there will be classes on Spanish and Italian cooking; seafood; outdoor grilling, healthy cooking for one; chocolates and confections; and baking skills, from artisan breads to cookies. www.enthusiasts.ciachef.edu

Path Through History Weekends are designed to make it easy to experience the Empire State's rich heritage and diverse attractions. Interactive science museums, homes of former presidents and artists, living history recreations, and former battlefields are among the cultural and historic sites offering discounted or free admission along with hands-on activities and special interest tours during these weekends. Many historic districts and parks also host festivals, often with live music, crafts and local foods. Whether you're a sports enthusiast, a nature lover, curious about history or simply want to have fun, these weekends are not to be missed. www.paththroughhistory.ny.gov

Follow the Foliage. I LOVE NEW YORK's weekly foliage reports begin September 11 and are updated **weekly** through early November at iloveny.com/fall. The site provides a detailed update of foliage conditions across New York State, including a map charting fall color progress, vantage points for viewing spectacular foliage, suggested autumn getaways and event listings. You may also hear highlights of the foliage report by dialing (800) CALL-NYS.

The Vineyard Express train, along the scenic Hudson River, stops at Poughkeepsie, with lunch at Vineyard Grill & Café and a hike along the Vineyard Walking Trail of **Millbrook Vineyards & Winery**. *Wine Enthusiast* magazine touted Millbrook Vineyards 2010 25th Anniversary Pinot Noir, which proved to be their top scorer at 89 out of 100 as well as its 2010 25th Anniversary Chardonnay rated at 88. www.millbrookwine.com

GLBT ATTRACTIONS

First Lady **Eleanor Roosevelt** is considered a human rights pioneer, and her Val Kill cottage retreat is preserved in the Hudson Valley. This property that she shared with her friends — including a lesbian couple, according to the New York Times — is just down the way from the **Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site** with its mansion, presidential library and museum. www.nps.gov/elro

Rochester's ImageOut is upstate's longest running lesbian/gay film and video festival. ImageOut presents GLBT arts and cultural experiences showcasing films, other creative works and artists to promote awareness, foster dialogue, and build a community. This year's festival will be held from October 11-20, 2013. www.imageout.org

Plan your trip on lgbt.iloveny.com. "The LGBT community and New York State go way back. This is where the Stonewall rebellion gave birth to the modern LGBT civil rights movement, just as it was the birthplace of the women's rights movement and a hub of the abolitionist movement. It's where Harvey Milk went to college, and home to the nation's oldest continually operating LGBT community center and longest continually published LGBT newspaper. We continued to make history when we became the largest state in the nation with legal marriage for all loving couples." □



Rhode Island

(Clockwise from left) Downtown Providence; Castle Hill Lighthouse; Historic Ochre Court Mansion in Newport.
Photos courtesy of iStockphoto.

By the Rhode Island Tourism Division, www.visitrhodeisland.com

Autumn is famously when New England's picturesque landscape explodes into a kaleidoscope of color, and Rhode Island is no exception. The fall foliage serves as the perfect backdrop to the state's magnificent oceanfront vistas, whether dining al fresco in Providence or exploring the casual luxury of Newport. Aside from the breathtaking scenery, Rhode Island's buzzing nightlife, cultural offerings, and critically acclaimed gastronomy make the Ocean State a great getaway all year round. And as proof that Little Rhody has always been one of the most gay-friendly states in the country, it recently became the tenth state to perform same-sex marriages.

FALL FEATURES

As the setting of the Gilded Age, Newport, Rhode Island, with its **Newport Mansions**, has long been emblematic of American luxury and elegance. For centuries, America's elite escaped to Newport to get away from the hustle and bustle of urban life, entertain other well-to-do guests, and take in the beautiful waterfront vistas of the Ocean State. Today, the Newport Mansions are protected national treasures which reflect the apex of American prosperity during the industrial revolution and which still retain the same opulent feel. Events such as the Newport Wine & Food Festival, hosted annually, also showcase the magnificence of the Mansions and bring them to life. www.newportmansions.org

The "crown jewel of the Providence renaissance," **WaterFire** is an award-winning installation by Barnaby Evans. Nestled along the banks of the rivers of downtown Providence, fire, music and art create an unforgettably soulful performance. Over eighty sparkling bonfires sit in braziers atop the three rivers of downtown Providence, while gondolas glide along the riverbanks and passengers take in the magical sights and sounds. Since its inception in 1997, WaterFire has drawn over ten million visitors to downtown Providence, revitalizing the city with its simple, inspiring beauty. www.waterfire.org

Rhode Island School of Design is ranked among the world's leading colleges of art and design and, as such, the **RISD Museum of Art** is also characterized as one of the nation's finest small museums. Among its collections are nineteenth-century French Art, classical Greek, Roman and Etruscan art, Medieval and Renaissance art, and European decorative and Oriental art. RISD Museum also features nineteenth- and twentieth-century American paintings, modern Latin American art, contemporary art and major holdings in costumes and textiles. www.risdmuseum.org

GLBT ATTRACTIONS

Founded by Roger Williams in 1636 on the tenets of tolerance, liberty and free will, **Downtown Providence** has no specific "gay neighborhood." The GLBT community is inextricably woven into Rhode Island culture, and Providence is no exception – the city's bustling downtown area boasts over two dozen gay bars, clubs, and other venues which are either gay-owned or gay-friendly and which are best explored on foot. www.goprovidence.com/visitors/gay-providence/

The **Providence Gay Men's Chorus** (PGMC) aspires to deliver empowering messages of equality for all, to present unique & collaborative musical performances by one of the finest gay male choral ensembles in the country, and to be inspirational leaders of social change. Since its founding in 1995 with a small ad in a local GLBT paper, PGMC has become an award-winning, nationally acclaimed organization and one of the best musical experiences Little Rhody has to offer. www.provgmc.org

Rhode Island's **GLBT Publications** are not to be missed. *Get* is Rhode Island's premiere gay magazine: www.Get-RI.com. *Newport Out* is the definitive guide to Newport, RI for the GLBT community: www.NewportOut.com. *Edge Providence* provides a news and entertainment portal focused on the GLBT community in Providence, RI: www.EdgeProvidence.com 

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Norwegian village with a typical fjord in the background. Photo courtesy of iStockphoto

There's a Fjord in Your Future

We're traveling through heaven. (Well, the official name is "Norway.") For five days and 1111 kilometers, we're driving the cream of the country's National Tourist Routes, selected to capture the most glorious patches of Norway's way-too-beautiful scenery, punctuated by architect-designed viewing points. Unlike our own bland superhighways, the drive IS the destination: an ultra-dramatic moving picture of powerhouse waterfalls gashing through titanic mountains, lush green hills fading to barren rocks aside primeval glaciers, and mirrorlike fjords fingering their way to the sea.

Picking up a car in Bergen, we follow the banks of Hardanger, "Queen of Norwegian fjords," pulling off for photos at Steindalsfossen Waterfall, gushing like God turned on the spigot. At its gift shop, I became willing victim to a Norwegian sweater and reindeer-pelt rug. (And broke my own rule: Souvenirs should never be big, heavy, or

expensive. Demerits for all three.)

Valleys of blinding green shelter houses where goats munch on grass roofs, huddled in the shadow of rocky slopes, formidable and gray. Driving through Ostense, we brake for its white wooden church from the 1600s, all pink and green within, like a cozy cottage, monitored by a sculpted angel floating above the baptismal font, tootling on a trumpet. At Hardangervidda Nature Center, near Vøringsfossen—the most famous waterfall in a land of famous waterfalls—we explore the interaction between glaciers, man, and Arctic animals, then bed down at Eidfjord, after a hyper-local dinner of salmon soup, Norwegian crab Caesar, fresh trout, and blueberry-topped cheesecake. From my balcony I count the ranks of big-shouldered hills receding in the mist.

Today it's the Snow Road, Aurlandsfjellet—looping over a barren, otherworldly plateau

dressed only in boulders and snow (in July!). We're well above the tree line. Cotton-wool clouds hover low enough to pluck from the sky. A rainbow glints through the sprinkles, announcing our arrival at the top of the world. We brake for artist-designed lookouts, such as the Stegastein Viewpoint, 30 meters of timber and steel over nothing but (gasp!) thin air, or a sculpted bear hibernating in his cave upon a stash of tourist junk. Then, Gudvangen and, oh, just another spectacular waterfall.

A bonus detour: the Borglund Stave Church, one of 28 remaining of the multi-gabled medieval wooden churches unique to Norway out of, once, a thousand. From wood hewn and treated in 1180 A.D., it was built in the style of Viking ships. Wood was cheaper than marble, so early Christians carved its timbers in intricate designs—scrolls, flora, faces—and outside, on the eaves, wondrous dragons' heads, to scare off evil spirits. Topping



(Clockwise from top) Bikers pass Urnes Stave Church - the oldest still standing; Ålesund's Art Nouveau City rebuilt after the fire in 1904; Waterfall on the National Tourist Routes through the fjords. Photos by Carla Waldemar

its lacy layers of tarred shingles? Not a cross, but a cockerel. In the nearby interpretive center we examine Viking artifacts—an antler-bone comb, an iron key. Pause here for another Norwegian artifact: crepe-like waffles topped with whipped cream and strawberry jam. Dinner, in Sogndal, saluted other culinary icons: lobster bisque, then reindeer meatballs with a side of lingonberries. And herring for breakfast, herring every day, from buffets that looks like Easter brunch.

Next morning, we follow the Sognefjellsvegen Route. But first, smitten with stave churches, we detour at Kaupanger's, whose stave poles have welcomed worshipers since 1150. It's plainer outside—no dragons—but glorious within. Magnified with floral paintings added “recently” (i.e., the 1600s) covering every surface from pulpit to crucifixion altarpiece, it's the third church to be erected here, after the king burned down the town in vengeance for an uprising.

Brakes once more at the Norsk Folk Museum, an open-air foray through 30 historic buildings from medieval days to the present: grass roofs and windows shuttered “to keep out bad weather and goblins.” Inside, spinning wheels, sleigh beds, butter churns. From a barn from 1800 scramble pigs, cows, and scolding chickens. The site's formal museum hosts homespun artifacts, from a Viking drinking cup to embroidered wedding clothes.

A ferry—we're getting good at these—sails us

to the Urness Stave Church, preserved by UNESCO, midway up a forested mountain, the oldest still standing: simple exterior again, but lush with carvings from 1070 that hark back to Viking-Irish trading with dragons, snakes, and lilies. Inside, Romanesque bones bear Baroque figures added five hundred years ago.

As we drive, the temperature plummets and the pale blue ice of glaciers appears. We pull off for viewpoints, including one heralding ancient stone-pile cairns that marked the way. Beside us, guys in shorts slide by on cross-country skis. We slow down for sheep to cross before pulling into Lot, with yet-another glam stave church.

We bed down in Hjelle at its sweet, gingerbread hotel, family-run since 1896 at the head of the fjord, crouching just below a glacier. Sitting at breakfast is like watching a movie as ships glide across the clear, clear water, and clouds scoot by, well below the snowcapped mountaintops. Those mighty hills stood guard long before us and will be here long after. It's hard to leave.

Not far away, we pull into Jostedalshsreen Park Center for a tutorial on glaciers. In times past, we learn, men crossed them for three reasons: to trade cattle, attend church, or find a bride. We also learn to dread an avalanche. Boulders tumbling into the ocean create tsunami waves that have destroyed whole villages time and again. A movie tells the story of Strynefjell National Route, our

next adventure. The 50-km. mountain road was built over 100 years ago by grueling manual labor. To open it every spring, crews hand-shoveled their way through snowdrifts higher than their heads. Barren and windy, it's marked by cairns.

It deposits us in Geiranger, anchoring a UNESCO-cited fjord where cruise shops lounge. At its fine Fjord Center, we step back in time via reconstructed sites: the quay drawing us to a steamer, which rocks us on “waves” till we land at the “farm” where one Ragnild was said to brew the best beer. Shelf farms stand in a row directly under a glacier so an avalanche would fall clear. Nonetheless, the takeaway is, glaciers are moving objects to be treated with caution. A sign reads, “Stay inside.” We did.

That night, we wandered to the historic village church for vespers with Norwegian folk songs—not unlike an Irish tune. Its young pastor offered English greetings in our honor.

After conquering many a hairpin turn, we surrendered the car in Ålesund, catching our breath at Ornesfingen Outlook, far above the fjord. The Trollstigen (trolls' path) stole our breath again, as did a stop at Gudbrandsjuvet, where rampaging rivers' mist form a rainbow-kissed waterfall atop the “kettles” it's carved into the stone.

Ålesund, on the Atlantic coast, unlike our previous overnights, is a true city—and a unique one, with its treasury of Art Nouveau buildings—built, in fact, by fate. A huge fire, lashed by a hurricane, destroyed the town in 1904, leaving its citizens out in the January cold. Aid rushed in, and with it, the plans of forward architects to build a brand-new town in the simple, flowing style. Trace its highlights at the Jugendstil Center with its Time Machine back to the past. Then climb the 418 steps (you bet I counted) to the peak of the vast city park for an overlook. Trace the streets to see why its designers decreed of its new style, “Here is the direction we should choose for Norwegian architecture of the future.”

The city is also all about the sea: an aquarium highlighting the critters we'd been eating; a fishing museum depicting cod: drying it, selling it worldwide; and also, in its History Museum, a section devoted to World War II's Resistance Movement, especially pivotal in this Nazi-occupied strategic port. (Hitler was convinced the Allied invasion would commence in Norway.)

Ålesund anchored the North Sea escape route in 1940, sailing refugees via the “Shetland Islands Express.” Old-timer Einar Gustaffson shared stories from his father and uncle, when escapees sought by the Nazis were given clothing to blend in, and ocean passage. “Be there in ten minutes” is all the warning Einar's uncle got. A parachuting hero from Ålesund destroyed the Nazis' heavy water plant, robbing them from perfecting the atom bomb—a turning point in the war. (Other locals, however, acted as infiltrators, turning in their brothers.)

More sea: an 1852 lighthouse, whose spiral steps we climbed to view art on exhibition in its present gallery. Then a table, sheltered from the wind, to savor coffee and waffles before dinner at Sjobuc, the town's premier seafood restaurant, under the beamed ceilings of a former warehouse. Tomorrow, the scenic Rauma Railway to Oslo. For information, visit Fjordnorway.com and innovationnorway.no.

BERGEN AND OSLO, BOOKENDS OF NORWAY'S FJORDS

Bergen, Gateway to the Fjords and Norway's first capitol, is where our adventure began. Oslo, on the opposite coast and capitol today, was our grand finale. The two cities, as different as Boston from New York, delight travelers by their contrasting vibes. Founded by King Olav in 1070, Bergen is cozy, intimate and close to its historic roots. Oslo polishes its urbane image, convivial and trendy, yet anchored in its heritage. Both honor green spaces, the lure of outdoors, and the call of the sea.

Bergen prides itself on its postcard-pretty red and ochre wooden warehouses guarding the wharf since Hanseatic times (now UNESCO-protected), starting from medieval King Haakon's Hall, Rosencrantz Tower, and venerable St. Mary's Church, the city's oldest. At the U in the water, the fish market lodges, where vendors offer try-before-you-buy tastes of smoked salmon, smoked whale, fish cakes, caviar. Beyond the bend rise layers of tiny houses, once home to the fishermen and factory workers who caught and packed the catch, now gentrified with pastel paint and roses.

Inland, a statue plays tribute to violinist Ole Bull, "the Paganini of the North," who married the daughter of a Minnesota senator (his statue also anchors our Uptown pocket park). Edvard Grieg, another local son, is honored at the theater where Ibsen's dramas debuted. Just beyond, flanking a pond where all Bergen promenades past midnight in summer's perpetual light, rises a quartet of art museums. One, home to Picassos and Klees, hosts Lysverket, a stylish new restaurant, where I swooned over a tasting menu of scallops with beet salad; "ham and eggs" starring bacon and quail egg on caramelized onions; confit of isgalt, a tender white fish partnered with shrimp mousse; then turbot partying with sweetbreads and garlic cream. The grand finale: strawberries with caramel, sorrel and white chocolate cream.

Oslo, on the west coast, never sleeps—at least, not in summer, when the sun rises at 4 and sets, kind of, near 11. All those with a breath in their body stroll down Karl Johans Street, from the cathedral—site of royal marriages—past Parliament, and a green promenade where kids cavort in fountains, right up to the castle, with locals picnicking on the king's front lawn. At Oslo's spiffy new Opera House, glitterati parade atop its very roof. Me, I'm slurping fish soup at the sidewalk café of the Grand Hotel, where artists, from Ibsen to Munch, habitually convened.

Fortified, I continue to the boardwalk lining Oslofjord, a vivacious playground pulsing with fish restaurants, pleasure boats, and boutiques to outfit their owners. Returning the following evening, I explored the tasting menu at contempo Tjuvholmen Sjømagasin. First, an amuse of hake sashimi with mango sorbet and soy foam (Take that, Noma! Your Copenhagen dining temple is not the only Scando kitchen to wield a pressure gun.) A single langoustine boasts twin sorbets of coriander and melon. Hake reappeared in a "Pure White" cauliflower trio (foamed, grilled and a la couscous). For dessert, the kitchen's futurists planted a "Spring Garden" in chocolate-crumble "dirt," with yogurt powder "snow," chocolate mousse, and chocolate ice cream.



Harbor in Bergen. Photo by Carla Waldemar

With only a day left, I sped through six museums, each deserving a lifetime to itself. A tram trundled past the King's farm, where the royal cows were grazing, to the Viking Ship Museum, home to two actual Viking vessels from 832 and 888 A.D., which once traveled the seven seas with goods to trade and foreign lands to conquer. Richly carved and powered by 30 oarsmen, the oldest was owned by a priestess who died at 80 and was buried, according to custom, with possessions for the afterlife, in her ship-as-tomb, encased in clay soil (which is why it never rotted). The second ship, copied in recent times, proved sturdy enough to sail to America. FYI: Viking helmets had no horns—no superglue back then.

Nearby, an open-air Folk Museum showcases 150 buildings from medieval times onward, including a storehouse from 1300, constructed sans nails; a party house of 1738 flaunting the latest trends: glass windows and a fireplace instead of hole in the roof. Another show-stopping stave church. An apple-cheeked teacher checks for clean hands as costumed kids file into school. Another re-enactor carves a fancy ironing board for the girl he hopes to marry. (Meanwhile, she's knitting him socks.) Yet another bakes lefse, which still more prance traditional dances.

Life of a far more somber sort is chronicled in the Resistance Museum, housed within the city's imposing castle fort. Nazi invaders tried to kill the king, who narrowly escaped to England. Quisling, the Nazis' puppet leader, imposed harsh new rules—no arms, no radios, no newspapers—inspiring strikes by Norway's athletes, teachers, parents, pastors and resisters. Those resisters smuggled messages in fish crates, distributed underground papers, and sailed refugees in fishing boats. At the exhibits' conclusion: the resounding cheers of VE Day.

The Museum of Decorative Arts traces gorgeous objects of everyday life, from a tapestry of 1600 titled "Five Wise and Five Foolish Virgins" (hard to decide which were which) on through each decade of the 20th century, from Art Nouveau to Pop and Postmodern Minimalism, dem-

onstrated in jewelry, furniture, clothing, kitchen and office equipment, sports gear. On the pier, the Astrud Fearling Museum—a shiplike structure designed by star-chitect Renzo Piano—flaunts convention with works by up-and-comers.

Best for last: This year marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Edvard Munch. Two museums have collaborated to offer the most extensive exhibit ever of the artist's works. The National Gallery showcases his early years, with his iconic themes of angst, melancholy, love (usually painful), and jealousy. "Dostoevsky's 'Crime and Punishment' had a huge impact on me," the artist wrote—and then painted his "Self Portrait in Hell". Also the famous "Kiss" and "Scream." His later works shine in the Munch Museum.

Finally, step outside to mellow in the sunlight. (It's 10:30 P.M.)—a beautiful ending to a beautiful adventure in a beautiful land. For information, see visitbergen.com, visitoslo.com, and innovationnorway.no. ■

SIDEBAR

Gay marriage became legal here in 2008.

Gay couples go to the restaurant or bar of their choice, with no need to seek out GLBT venues.

In 2014, Europride will be held in Oslo.

Gay Bars

Ett Glass, Bobs Pub, Brighton Pub, Eksker, Diplomaten, London Pub & Club, and, for girls, SO.

GLBT Publications

Blikk, www.blikk.no
Pink Planet, www.pinkplanet.no
Check out Tronsmo Bookstore



Photo courtesy of iStockphoto

Duluth-Superior Pride Rules Labor Day Weekend

This year, Duluth-Superior Pride marks its 27th anniversary with a four-day cornucopia of events in the Twin Ports of Duluth, Minnesota, and Superior, Wisconsin, over Labor Day Weekend, August 29-September 1. Appropriately enough, the theme is “What a Difference a Gay Makes!”

Headliners at the Pride Festival in Duluth on August 31 are superstar chanteuses Crystal Waters and CeCe Peniston, along with Chicago duo Amy and Freddy. Another attraction is the Duluth-Superior Pride Historical Collection, an exhibit covering 27 years of GLBT history in the Twin Ports.

Now that same-sex marriage is legal in Minnesota (but not in Wisconsin, unfortunately!), wedding ceremonies will be performed during the festival at a special wedding tent, with nondenominational clergy officiating, complete with cupcakes and champagne—all overlooking beautiful Lake Superior. Couples must obtain their marriage license at least five days in advance. The wedding gala is not limited to same-sex couples.

Following the festival, again this year, both Superior GLBT bars, The Flame Nightclub and The Main Club, just a few blocks apart, are cohosting the Pride Block Party at their respective venues.

Looking for a reasonable and fun place to stay on the night of August 31? Try the venerable Duluth Sauna in Downtown Duluth, open from Noon on Saturday to 9 AM on Sunday.

The Pride Parade takes place on September 1 in Superior, but the usual route on Tower Avenue is under construction, so the parade is moved one block east to Ogden Avenue.

For more information, visit www.dspride.com. □

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 29

Mayor's Reception & Weekend Opening
5 PM
The Depot
506 W. Michigan St., Duluth

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30

Art Exhibition

5 PM
Zinema
222 E. Superior St., Duluth

Poetry Reading

6 PM
Jitters Coffee House
102 W. Superior St., Duluth

Bonfire on the Point

Sunset-Sunrise
First Parking Lot on
Wisconsin Point Rd.,
Superior

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31

Hummingbird Family 5K Run

Registration 8:30 AM
Starts 9 AM
Western Lake Superior
Waterfront Trail,
7408 Grand Ave., Duluth

Pride Festival

11 AM-7 PM
Bayfront Festival Park, Duluth

Pride Block Party

8 PM-Midnight
The Flame Nightclub
1612 Tower Ave., Superior
The Main Club
1217 Tower Ave., Superior

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

Worship Service & Breakfast

Breakfast 9 AM
Pride Service 8:30 AM & 10:30 AM
Peace Church
1111 N. 11th Ave. E., Duluth

Fruit Float Boat Cruise

3:30 PM
Vista Fleet
323 Harbor Dr., Duluth

Foo Foo Choo Choo

Pre-Boarding Party 1:30 PM
Boarding 3:30 PM
The Depot
506 W. Michigan Ave., Duluth

Annual Pride Drag Show

Benefits Northland HIV/AIDS Groups
8 PM
The Main Club
1217 Tower Ave., Superior

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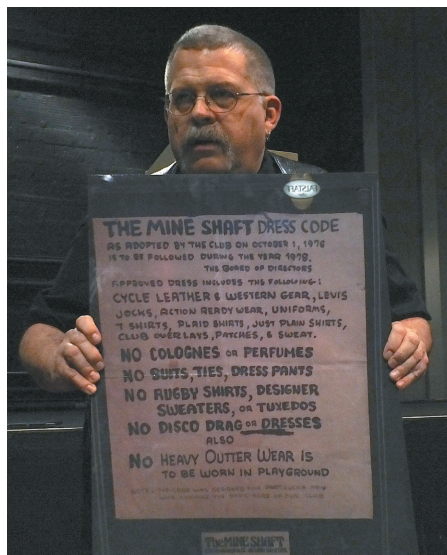
Hardy Haberman Discusses... Leather Traditions and Protocols

Noted leather community author, filmmaker, educator, and activist Hardy Haberman was in the Twin Cities recently to present a lecture on leather traditions and protocols, and the “Old Guard” who supposedly created them. Haberman spoke at In The Heart Of The Beast Theater on Saturday afternoon, June 22. The lecture was part of this year’s Minnesota Leather Pride celebration and was sponsored by Leather Journey.

Haberman started with a description of how he got into the leather scene in the mid-1970s—and, as part of that process, discovered for himself the leather traditions and protocols of the time. He then offered a condensed history of the gay leather community’s formation and development in the 1950s and 1960s. He talked about what some consider the “halcyon Old Guard days” of the 1970s and how the decimation of the leather community in the 1980s by AIDS led to the creation of new traditions and protocols.

Haberman noted that many of leather’s traditions and protocols came from military life, and later from gay motorcycle clubs, but he also noted that there is no one fixed set of Old Guard protocols written on a scroll somewhere. Haberman also made the point that every leather generation thinks of itself as New Guard and the generation before as Old Guard: “All of us have an Old Guard. It’s whoever taught us.”

Many of the Old Guard protocols Haberman grew up with are hardly revolutionary: “#1, you respect your elders. #2, you don’t speak to somebody you don’t know until you’ve been introduced. It’s common courtesy! If you get the Miss Manners book and look at etiquette, you have Old Guard traditions and protocols, with the exception of a few kinks thrown in. It’s not rocket science.”



Hardy Haberman displays the vintage Old Guard dress code from The Mineshaft in New York. Photo by Steve Lenius.

Haberman then offered his thoughts on a few leather community values.

Honor: “Honor is being true to yourself, being true to your community, being authentic. A person who’s not honorable is not authentic, right? So—how much honor is there in Sir Grand Dom of the Universe on Fetlife.com who has 25 cyberslaves but has never shown his face in public?”

Integrity: “Integrity means all aspects of your life are integrated. It means that you are authentic. It means that when I say this is who I am, it’s who I am. It means that I’m not afraid. It takes courage. As kinky people we have no protections whatsoever. If you have children and you can get in a messy divorce, your partner who used to tie you up can say, ‘She’s kinky and shouldn’t have those children.’ Those children can be taken away be-

cause you’re kinky.”

“So I understand why some people can’t be out. But until we come out as kinky people and live our lives authentically, we will never have any kind of protection, we will never have any kind of equality, and we will always be hiding in the shadows behind that screen name.”

“The more of us that are out, the more difficult it is for other people to push us back into the closet. I wear my club colors to church. We have a whole pew of leathermen. We sit right down in the front. We want people to know that we are there, too—that we are part of the blessed community. It becomes more difficult for people to exclude you when they see you and they know you.”

Community: “Community means that you show up, you help out, you become active. You can participate by showing up, but you can participate even better by getting involved. Getting involved gets back to integrity. It means you put your ass on the line, you put your name out there, you become visible. There’s a risk, yes. It’s scary, yes. Everything we do is scary.”

Authenticity: “Authenticity is one of the values that I think was Old Guard when I came into the community, and still works today. Create a protocol and a lifestyle that works for you. Live into it. Because someday you’re going to pass that knowledge on, and you’re going to be somebody else’s Old Guard.

“You’re going to be an example. As leather people, we’re an example for the leather people that come after us. The way we behave, the way we treat each other, the way we play, is going to get passed down. And it’s going to attract people who want what we have. Be who you are, be honest, be out there—and see what happens.” □

BAR SHOWCASE | photos by George Holdgrafer

19 BAR AUGUST 7



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EagleBOLTbar Celebrates 15th Anniversary with Northern Decadence

A number of cities nationwide have gay bars named Eagle, always an indication that the establishment caters to a leather crowd. The eagleBOLTbar in Downtown Minneapolis, which marks its 15th anniversary this year, certainly fits that description, but unlike its namesakes elsewhere, also welcomes a diverse cross section of the local GLBT community.

Under the able aegis of owner Ed Hopkins, the Minneapolis Eagle opened September 8, 1998, followed by the Bolt on January 31, 2003, and the Underground on June 25, 2004, plus the patio has expanded three times. Over the past decade-and-a-half, the popular club has been hugely supportive of Twin Cities GLBT organizations such as The Alive-

ness Project, which benefits from weekly bingo games Thursdays.

To celebrate its anniversary, the eagleBOLTbar is hosting Northern Decadence on August 31 (Labor Day Weekend). It features Berracuda, with DJ Matt Consola spinning. Started in 2006, Berracuda is the most attended bear dance party and most prolific gay dance event in the United States. Widely known as a circuit DJ, as well as a record label owner (Redzone Records) and producer, Consola is resident DJ at Sanctuary, Adonis, and Boy Bar in San Francisco. ■

eagleBOLTbar
515 Washington Ave. S., Mpls.
(612) 338-4214
www.eagleboltbar.com



DJ Matt Consola. Photo Courtesy of Matt Consola

LAVENDER LENS | Photos by Andy Lien

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MARRIAGE IN MINNESOTA PART 2: MARRIED AT MIDNIGHT - MINNESOTA'S LARGEST WEDDING RECEPTION JULY 31 - AUGUST 1, 2013



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MARRIAGE IN MINNESOTA PART 2: HISTORIC WEDDING IN LORING PARK WITH GRAND AVENUE OFFICIANTS AUGUST 1, 2013



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MARRIAGE IN MINNESOTA PART 2: MINNESOTA LYNX "COURT OF DREAMS" AUGUST 2, 2013



BIGGAYNEWS.COM: YOUR GLBT WORLD NEWS!

BIGGAYNEWS FROM NEW MEXICO:**Gay Couple 'Forced To Sit At Back Of Bus After Driver Saw Them Holding Hands'**

The New York Daily News reports that a gay couple was forced to sit at the back of a bus after its driver saw them holding hands, they claim. Ron McCoy and Christopher Bowers, both from Portland Oregon, were in Albuquerque for the city's Pride festival, and boarded the airport shuttle bus when they allege that the driver noticed their clasped hands and told them that they were to go to the back of the bus if they were going to do that. The couple complied with the request, but has filed a complaint with the ACLU over the incident.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM SEATTLE:**Jason Jacobs, Seattle Gay Man, Beaten In Alleged Hate Crime**

The *Huffington Post* reports that the Seattle Police Department is reportedly investigating the August 5th beating of a local gay man as a hate crime. Jacobs told the media that he was walking through the Capitol Hill area of Seattle around midnight when he was confronted by three men and two women who began taunting him with anti-gay slurs. Jacobs attempted to get away, but the group chased him and allegedly attacked him, causing him to suffer a broken nose, cuts to the face and abrasions to his knees.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM RUSSIA:**Russia Will Enforce Anti-Gay Law During Olympics**

USA Today reports that Russia will enforce a new law cracking down on gay rights activism when it hosts international athletes and fans during the 2014 Olympics in Sochi, the country's sports minister said Thursday, appearing to contradict assurances to the contrary from the International Olympic Committee. Initially, the IOC had been told that it had received assurance from the Russian government that there would be no discrimination or actions taken against athletes, officials, spectators or the media attending the Sochi games. However, according to Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko, "An athlete of nontraditional sexual orientation isn't banned from coming to Sochi. But if he goes out into the streets and starts to propagandize, then of course he will be held accountable."

BIGGAYNEWS FROM URUGUAY:**Gay Couples Rush To Be First To Wed In Uruguay**

USA Today reports that same-sex couples rushed to the altar Monday in Uruguay as the country became the first in the Americas to legalize gay marriage. TV producer Sergio Miranda and his partner, artist Rodrigo Borda, showed up before dawn to register under Uruguay's "marriage equality law". Another unidentified couple, however, was the first same-sex couple to actually be married, after gaining special permission to waive the ten days of bureaucracy from the Civil Registry in order for a rushed ceremony to be performed in a hospital where one of the men is dying from advanced cancer.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM THE GREAT BRITAIN:**"Skyfall" Actor Ben Whishaw Officially Comes Out As Gay, Reveals He Is Married**

The *Huffington Post* reports that "Skyfall" actor Ben Whishaw has officially come out as gay, and has been married to his partner, Australian composer Mark Bradshaw, for a year now. The 32-year-old British actor's sexuality has long been speculated about, but never confirmed by either him or his representatives, even when some questioned it in March of 2011 when Whishaw was starring in roles in two homoerotic stage plays. When questioned previously, he stated that he was a private person and did not feel comfortable revealing certain topics regarding his life. □

In response to "Minneapolis Energy" in Issue 475:

Speaking as someone who is both part of the Twin Cities LGBT community and part of the Minneapolis Energy Options campaign, I would like to give an update to the letter printed from mayoral candidate Mark Andrew, whom I have interacted with in person multiple times this year at events. On the day Lavender issue 475 came out we were no longer pushing for the city council to put the city-owned utility option on the ballot. We instead started working with the council to agree to a city franchise agreement framework consisting of the more basic renewable and environmental objectives which I witnessed candidate Andrew publicly declare his support for in front of the city DFL convention. We are responsible and productive not reckless. In fact the grassroots organizing we did led to an Xcel Energy executive sending a public letter of multiple clean energy concessions to Mayor Rybak on Aug 8th. Plus we had an unprecedented success of reaching Memorandum of Understanding with CenterPoint gas; which candidate Andrew praised our campaign for on his Facebook post from July 24th. Mark Andrew has since confirmed with me that "we all have the same goals."

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Speaking Out Against Bullying

With the new school year starting, we want to share with you the stories of Kyrstin Schuette and Jake Ross, two courageous young people who have spoken out about their experiences of being bullied and how it impacted their lives.

Earlier this year, they spoke to members of the Minnesota House and Senate in support of the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act, a comprehensive anti-bullying bill, introduced in the State Legislature by Senator Scott Dibble and Representative Jim Davnie. The bill provides clear definitions of bullying, harassment, and intimidation as well as enumerated protections for students who are most likely to be bullied or harassed because of their actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, disability, sex, age, national origin, immigration status, marital status, family status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression.

Kyrstin Schuette was on a high school choir field trip to Wisconsin when she was first confronted with bullying. Her cell phone was stolen and private pictures of Kyrstin and her girlfriend were passed around the suburban Minnesota school and beyond.

"When I confided this to my teacher, she shifted the blame to me instead of my harassers," Schuette testified to the Minnesota House and Senate committees earlier this year, in support of the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act. "Her response was that if I didn't want people to see my photos, then they shouldn't be on my phone in the first place. I spent a sleepless night listening to the judgmental whisper of the other choir members talking about me, and the constant buzzing of cell phones sharing the text message. After pushing through a sub-par choir performance, we finally went home. All I could think about was how I would face everyone at school the next day.

"As soon as I walked through the school doors that morning, it was obvious that those messages hadn't just stayed within the choir group. The looks I got cut like daggers; the not-so subdued whispers were deafening. I walked through the halls suddenly feeling ashamed about who I was. Once in the choir room, my

teacher began talking about an 'incident' that had occurred on the trip and how 'drama' would not be tolerated. I initially felt a spark of hope, though it was quickly extinguished when we sat in a 'healing circle' that quickly turned into a homophobic rant from my fellow classmates. While I believe my teacher had the best of intentions, the circle just added more fuel to the fire."

The bullying continued unabated, and by the time Schuette was a high school senior, the name-calling via texting and social media became too much. She dropped out of school, attempted suicide, and like so many young people in Minnesota had no real protection against youthful hate-speak and crimes – not from her school nor state lawmakers.

As Schuette describes, bullying can take many forms beyond physical altercation. The Safe & Supportive Minnesota Schools Act defines bullying as (among other things) behaviors that inflict intentional emotional distress or substantially interfere with a student's educational opportunities or performance.

Ten-year-old Forest Lake student Jake Ross knows more than he should about all this. The bullying he experienced started three years ago with teasing and harassment. His mother went to the elementary school administration, only to be met with institutional indifference and skepticism. Jake also testified to the Minnesota House and Senate – in and of itself an act of bravery that goes well beyond the cowardly ken of his pint-sized antagonists, not to mention that of the school officials who chalked up his complaints to an overly sensitive kid and an over-protective mother.

"At a meeting with the school director and assistant administrator, my mom asked, 'How will you ensure a safe learning environment for our son?'" Jake told the House and Senate members. "The answer given to her by the director was, 'I can't help you. I can't tell you.' Toward the end of the school year, my mom filled out harassment and violence reporting forms for several of the incidents of harm that happened to me, but the school administration did not investigate them.

"Because this school would not provide

a safe learning environment for me, my parents took me and my younger sister out of this school. The following year, my mom and a group of other parents concerned about bullying spoke at a school board meeting of this school. They shared their concern for the lack of clear procedures and consequences for bullying, and they asked this school to provide a 'code of conduct' booklet which would clearly explain consequences for bullying. Even after this group of parents asked for bullying prevention procedures to be put in place, the school board and the administration did not want to make any changes to their school's policies, saying they did not need this at their school."

In her testimony, Schuette concluded: "This bill is something that will impact every single Minnesota student. As an older sister, this is particularly important to me. I don't want my siblings to go to school and feel like they aren't safe and supported as they pursue their education. I want them and every student to be able to go to school and prom and walk with their fellow classmates to get their diplomas. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to have those memories, as I completed high school online.

"We have an opportunity to create social change with this bill. Had something like it been in place while I was going to school, I believe my outcome would have been different. My teachers might have been more educated on how best to intervene and how to appropriately handle perpetual bullying incidents like mine. My mother could have benefitted from available resources that might have helped our struggling relationship.

"Unfortunately, I'll never know how a bill like this could have helped me, or how many now lost lives it could have saved. But today I ask you to think for a moment about a student you know – your siblings, your own children – and how they might someday be protected by this bill. Let's work together to make sure that they never have to go through the things that I, and so many others, had to in school."

Both Kyrstin Schuette and Jake Ross have become advocates for bullying prevention and intervention. ■



What Can YOU Do About Bullying?

Here's a list of suggestions from Safe Schools Coalition member The Diversity Council in Rochester about what students and adults can do to help stop bullying.

1. First of all, don't be a bully yourself!
2. Don't encourage others who are bullying by laughing or egging them on.
3. Don't protect the bully.
4. Don't stay silent. Use your power to speak up!
5. If you feel it's not safe for you to try to stop the bullying, find an adult you trust to intervene.
6. Support the victim. Encourage them, walk down the hallways beside them, sit with them at lunch.
7. Support others who have the courage to speak up against bullying. There is strength in numbers.
8. Respect yourself and respect others.
9. Appreciate others for their differences.
10. Create a culture of friendship and inclusion.
11. Make it clear that bullying is not cool.
12. Be part of the solution, not the problem!
13. Take the Diversity Council's pledge to do your part to end bullying at: http://www.diversitycouncil.org/PDF_files/AntiBullyingPledge.pdf

For more tips on bullying prevention and intervention, visit www.diversitycouncil.org.

The Safe Schools for All Coalition (a group of more than 90 education, disability, youth, religious, LGBT and social service organizations, as well as individual citizens) and OutFront Minnesota are working to pass anti-bullying legislation and they need your help. To get involved, email Safe Schools Coalition Organizer Katrina Plotz: kplotz@outfront.org and sign up here to receive the latest news and updates from OutFront: <https://outfront.wufoo.com/forms/z7x0k1/>

Find more information about bullying prevention and safe schools legislation on OutFront Minnesota's web site: www.outfront.org

Other anti-bullying resources for students, parents and teachers:

Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network

www.glsen.org

GLSEN strives to assure that each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Education Rights (PACER) Center

www.pacer.org/bullying

PACER is organization dedicated to expanding the opportunities for children and young adults with disabilities, and their families. The organization also runs the National Center for Bullying Center.

Stop Bullying Now

www.stopbullying.gov

This youth-oriented federal government campaign features a tip sheet for "Bullying Among Children and Youth on Perceptions and Differences in Sexual Orientation."

The Trevor Project

www.thetrevorproject.org

The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth.

Safer Schools to Better Minnesota

Marriage equality's recent passing in Minnesota is not the end of the road for GLBT residents of the state. Luckily, some metro schools have risen to the challenge and created their own policies toward equality.

Out for Equity

Ring in as the state's second largest district, St. Paul Public Schools has created a program which exceeds where others have failed. Out for Equity, at 18 years old, is one of only 10 district-level GLBT programs in the nation.

In an earlier interview with the Twin Cities Daily Planet, Tiffany Lane, the program's director, mentioned that benefits of a district-wide program are plenty. Out for Equity is able to host support groups (for students, parents and staff), an GLBT teen social night, provide resources to Gay-Straight Alliances, advise on district policies and offer counseling to struggling students. "It's about holding the district accountable and making sure everyone feels safe and included," Lane says.

Lane, who sits on the bullying task force for the district, mentioned that they are currently looking at the bullying policy to make sure that it addresses everything that needs to be. With a main goal of raising awareness of the program, Lane says "what I've realized is, people want to do something, but they don't realize what to do or what is protocol."

This leads to the program's major goal of education: utilizing resources to ensure staff, parents and students are all aware of the issues, how to report them, and what can be done about them is key.

Later in the interview, Lane goes on to say "people see problems, and they think it's easy to ignore it and it will go away, but that never happens. You've got to handle situations. You can't ignore it. It won't go away."

Avalon School

Having partnered with the St. Paul Public Library System's One Book program, Avalon School (a charter school which serves grades 7-12) staff and students read A.S. King's novel *Everybody Sees the Ants* and discuss the issues of bullying developed throughout the book in depth. Shortly after the school began its study of the book, it became evident that the approach paired nicely with Lady Gaga's Born Brave Tour and the accompanying Tour Bus – a tech-savvy portable site for young people to talk about bullying, especially as it intersects with LGBTQ issues. As one example of many of the pro-LGBTQ stances that the school supports, students from the school attended the concert and tour bus and Avalon School's library partnership project was thus rebranded Read Brave.

Soon after, the idea of a gender neutral bathroom was brought to the table. The school had experimented with having the two bathrooms act as gender neutral during set times, but the approach had never truly helped students who identified as trans to feel comfortable going to the bathroom. As it stands, the school does not have the funds to engage in the project of building a third, gender neutral bathroom, but Kevin Ward, an advisor at the school, said the project is being taken on by the parents and other organizations. "One parent, a designer, has volunteered to look at our plans and offer some of his own," he says. The next step? The school's original architect will be brought in to estimate cost and possible locations.

"Our main appeal to raise money for this bathroom is that Avalon prides itself on reaching out to students and families who have not been welcome in other schools," Ward says. "We think that adding a bathroom that respects students and others who do not feel comfortable in either a men's or women's restroom further reinforces that message."

Campus Pride Index

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities has earned five of five stars for the second year in a row on the Campus Pride Index. The index, which measures components which contribute to a more inclusive, welcoming and respectful GLBT campus, gave the university a 99 percent, landing in second place behind Cornell University.

"We are constantly finding ways to further support LGBT and Allies, all of which provide an inclusive and welcoming campus for all students," said Jason Jackson, assistant director of the GLBTA Programs Office on campus.

The index gave the university perfect marks in six of its eight categories (support and institutional commitment, academic life, housing, campus and safety, counseling and health, and recruitment and retention efforts) but docked points in the student life and policy inclusion categories.

The Campus Pride Index serves as a vital tool in assisting campuses to learn how to improve campus life for the GLBT community. The index was created to respond to a demand for tools and resources to assist campuses in improving policies and practices. Comprised of more than 50 self-assessment questions, the index weighs all eight categories equally in the overall score. The index is owned and operated by Campus Pride, the leading national nonprofit organization for student leaders and campus groups working to create safer college environments for GLBT students.

Other Minnesota colleges to receive top marks include Carleton College, Macalaster College, University of Minnesota (Duluth), and Hamline University. □





RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW: A CENTENARY CELEBRATION

Brent Elliott
Francis Lincoln Ltd.
\$40

Decade by decade, author Elliott, librarian and archivist to the Royal Horticultural Society describes the birth, growth, and present-day flowering of this grand event. Interleaved through the narrative are "My Chelsea" sections by noted designers, gardeners and many other individual witnesses, including RHS Show Director. Trends have come and gone, royalty has passed through, and high society and hoi polloi have braved heat and

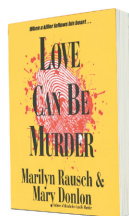
rain to participate in this annual gala that is both a British social event, and arbiter of garden design, planting styles, and taste. American readers can immerse themselves in RHS Chelsea Flower Show's ambiance, while cribbing marvelous ideas for their own garden projects. More than 200 photographs drawings and maps illustrate this handsome 100-year celebration of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show.



JUMP THE GUN
Lori L. Lake
Quest Books
\$18.95

St. Paul's Dez Reilly is back, and Lake has you from the first pages with the murder of one of Dez's dear friends—and a fellow officer. Still reeling under this blow, while on her way to the Federal Building on another case involving Russian mobsters (see *Have Gun Will Travel*), Dez sees the case's prime witness murdered before her eyes. As in Lake's other novels, there are plots, subplots and well-crafted twists and turns that nevertheless stay firmly believable and consistent with the book's inner

logic. Dez's lover, officer Jaylynn Savage, is also at risk and Dez must balance her inner and outer lives with force and delicacy to survive. Lake skillfully reveals how Dez grows in depth and breadth through these recent trials.



LOVE CAN BE MURDER
Marilyn Rausch & Mary Donlon
North Star Press of St. Cloud
\$14.95

Rausch and Donlon's device—it works superbly—is a novel within a novel. Protagonist Chip Collingsworth, groomed to follow his dad as a well-known neurosurgeon, is now reduced to a thrice-divorced mystery writer in the depths of Turners Bend, Iowa. His first, *Cranium Murders*, hit it big—his exes as villains—and now he's working on *Mind Games*, in which the plot also follows his life both in murder and romance: As Chip's protagonist, stalwart neurosurgeon Dr. John Goodman, yearns for red-headed FBI

agent Jo Schwann, so Chip falls for local veterinarian, ginger Jane Swanson. The authors handle the double plots deftly using crisp writing and humor to move everything along to a satisfying end. If you haven't yet, also read *Headaches Can Be Murder*.



CAPOLOVORO DI UOMO: MASTERPIECE OF MAN
Capolavoro Publishing
Adam P. Kennedy & Renée Kennedy – publishers
\$89.95

The work of forty-six artists is displayed in over 350 pages of the explicit and erotic, widely and wildly varied, and drawn from around the globe. Gonzalo Orquin's moody oils offer glimpses into shadowy, everyday sensory worlds; New Zealander Josef Szekeres lush, illusory pieces hint at his background at Walt Disney Animation Australia (*Little Mermaid II*, etc.); Comic book artist Logan Kowalsky's versions of Santa, Pornomicon, and fantastic digital paintings; Brute by Simon's giant hero celebrates

the common man, as he says, "discerning beauty where few others can find it," and Minneapolis's own Marc Debauch who invests his oils and gouaches with intimate and erotic moments like "Kirby in the Shower," and "Mid-Morning Light." A beautifully realized collection with something for anyone who loves Man. Men. □

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2013 Scion FR-S - All Photos By Randy Stern

SCION FR-S

Remember the sports car?

It was one of the greatest sensations that came out of World War II. They were light in weight, offered minimal seating, a lower stance, and they would run like nothing else on the road. Yet, they were temperamental. Many a carburetor was torn down on the kitchen floor from suburban ranch homes to collegiate dorm rooms to ensure that precious fuel would mix well with its small engines.

All of the sudden, the sports car became reliable - and refined. Some sports cars were priced into the higher echelons, so only a few could experience "real" performance. Others remained affordable for everyday enthusiasts and people living their mid-life crisis. The latter group of sports cars is the ones we fondly remember the most.

Aside from the Mazda MX-5 Miata and the Hyundai Genesis Coupe, what is left for those of us felt slighted by the price tag of the modern sports car? Well, what about the Hyundai

Veloster Turbo? Some might say "yes," but there are times when it is thrown in with the hot hatch crowd. There are others we could argue, but there is a purist definition of a sports car - it must have rear wheel drive.

To bring back the purists, Toyota and Subaru joined forces to create one for us. Subaru calls their version the BRZ. In North America, Toyota's GT86 is sold as a Scion - the FR-S.

Scion? *Really?*

Yes - Scion.

Why call this a Scion? Maybe someone at Toyota thought the "youthful" brand needed some help with image and product to let its corporate sports coupe be sold alongside the boxy xB and the miniature iQ. But, what is in a badge really?

This is not just about Scion and the brand's imminent tenth year anniversary. The FR-S is a car that has been talked about by enthusiasts of many stripes for quite some time. Is all of this talk for real? Do we actually have a return

of the sports car in its purest form?

The joint effort between Toyota and Subaru meant that each entity had its own task to work on to complete the package. It appears that Toyota worked on the design with inspirations from its past - namely the 2000GT of the 1960s and the Corolla AE86 from the 1980s. I also see some hints of Celica in its design - or, rather, its ghosts. You can tell that Toyota misses these great coupes to want to find inspiration its design.

The formula is simple: a long front hood leading to a stubby rear end. That is truly the 2000GT in a nutshell, but I would argue that it reminds me of a rival of Toyota's - the Datsun 240Z. If you want to stretch this further, the 240Z was itself influenced by the Jaguar E-Type, otherwise known as the XKE. In a nutshell, Toyota and Subaru created a throwback to the great days of the sports car.

However, the FR-S is thoroughly modern. Some details speak to 2013 rather than 1970 or

1961. The tires may have lower profiles with larger alloys, but one could imagine the FR-S as one for days of the original Z.

Step inside, and you are greeted with plenty of Toyota touches melding the modern with the past. The dashboard itself is a prime example, mixing some 1960s style with some faux carbon fiber effect. The three-dial instrument panel has the tachometer in the center with a digital speedometer readout. The digital speedo came in handy since you could only see the actual left dial at night – when you turn on the lights. Buttons on the left side help you get your trip information, including fuel economy. HVAC knobs felt familiar – that is, if you have been in every Scion and Toyota below the Avalon.

Pioneer drives this audio system, as they do with all Scions. Through eight speakers, you get rich sound from your Bluetooth connected device and HD Radio. The Bluetooth phone connection is OK overall. As with these Pioneer audio systems, the switches and knobs are fiddly and the readout is quite basic. You could remedy this by spending an extra \$845 for the BeSpoke touch screen faceplate that adds some internet radio stations to the suite. The lack of SiriusXM satellite radio and a navigation system could be a miss for the FR-S, but that is up for debate.

The front buckets were designed for track duty. Thick bolstering tucked in my wide body, though allowing my shoulders to find proper rest above them. These are not the most comfortable seats in the industry, but rather appropriate for the FR-S's aspirations. Legroom is ample, depending on how back you move the seats. Do not expect the steering wheel adjustment to go further to clear thick thighs. In my case, I found a low enough seating position, at a cost of some ungraceful entries and exits.

The FR-S is considered a 2+2. That means there are rear seats in this car. The bad news is that there is no room behind me at all. They are fine for small children and infants, but average sized adults would pass on sitting in the back. Trunk space is a bit more generous, however. Perhaps shoving a few duffle bags

for the weekend would do in the FR-S. The rear seat folds down for extra stuff, but only leave you with just a driver and passenger – which works out just fine, really.

Underneath the hood is a true collaboration. The block is all Subaru – a 2.0litre horizontally opposed four-cylinder engine. However, the D-4's fuel injection system and other engine enhancements are from Toyota. This collaboration yields 200 horsepower with 150 pound-feet of torque. The engine is best described as "not bad." It sounds great through the exhaust pipe, but I was hoping for more teeth from the motor.

If you choose the six-speed manual gearbox, the engine would show you its teeth. Instead, he tester had the six-speed automatic transmission with manual modes on the floor shifter and through the paddle shifters on the steering wheel. In normal mode, the transmission shifts smoothly, but restrains the boxer engine from making dramatic and epic moves. Press the button into Sport, and the shifts become jerky. Even if you work the paddles to change gears, Sport mode still make you feel each gear changes as retaliation. There is another mode – VSC Sport. That keeps the FR-S in Sport mode, while turning off the traction control. If you are a brave soul, you might want to try this once before you commit to it on further jaunts.

Perhaps the most controversial part of the driveline is the driving wheels. Normally, a Subaru boxer engine send power to all four wheels, with a front wheel bias. Toyota and Subaru agreed to make this a rear-wheel drive vehicle only. This placates the sports car lover, as the myth is rear wheel drive makes for a better sports car. Somehow, it works.

Being a sports car, driving dynamics are usually under high scrutiny. With a rear-drive model, the key emphasis is on handling. It handles well – near flat through the corners, hugs the road and send grip down to its Michelin Primacy HL tires. The tires were surprisingly quiet for a sports car. The steering is response, reactive and perfectly weighted. Coupled with a great steering set, and the FR-S can adver-

tise it has the moves necessary for sports car credibility.

There are some trade offs with having great handling. The overall ride can be described as thud solid. The FR-S hates cracks, gaps, lumps and potholes. The suspension is simply too firm to forgive any road imperfections out there. You also get plenty of noise in the cabin, but not enough to drown the Pioneer audio system. Then, there are the brakes. They do stop in both normal and panic situations, but with an excessive amount of boost from the master cylinder.

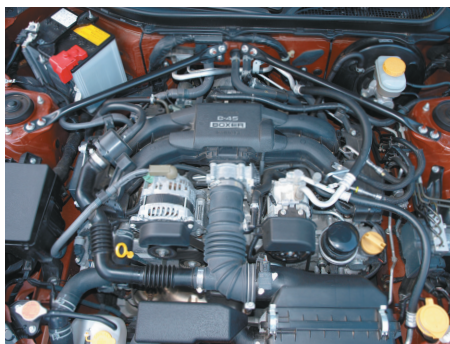
Fuel consumption is actually quite good from the boisterous 2.0litre boxer engine and the six-speed autobox. Does 29.0MPG sound good to you? It certainly was a huge surprise for a sports car.

The cost of admission into the sports car world is \$25,255 for the manual gearbox version of the FR-S. This automatic version ran the tab to \$26,355. That is a \$1,100 gap between true enthusiasm and semi-enthusiasm, depending on how you view the two gearboxes.

What about the FR-S? Is it what it is supposed to be? In a sense, yes – it is a sports car. It has the stance, the low-slung body and low interior. It handles well and has the sound that makes it a sports car. Let us not forget that it is somewhat practical by virtue of expanding a small trunk for the sake of the rear seat.

But, is it a good sports car? This is where it gets a bit muddy. The FR-S tries hard to be a sports car. To be one, it needs to be legendary. Some sports cars became legendary right off the lot – the Mazda MX-5 Miata, for example. However, if the sports car crowd has questions about a certain vehicle's virtues, then you wonder if the credibility is not there yet. IF it has the legend for a strong following where everyone who is a driver agrees that the FR-S belongs in the same air as the Miata, the Genesis Coupe, the 240Z and others before it.

The FR-S is a decent effort. Its followers will defend it to the hilt. However, it needs refinement. It needs to be engaging for both enthusiasts and those who want to be one. It is almost there – *almost*. ▢





Brainwashed

"Your friend is cute," he said.

It was a man at the next table over. Bearded and curly-haired, I guessed he was early thirties. He had turned away from his two drink mates just as my friend Lucy—a strawberry blonde who no way looks her fifty years—left our Dinkytown restaurant table for the restroom.

I answered, "Yes, she is."

The man went back to his friends and that was the end of it.

For him.

By coincidence, earlier that day I had watched a much younger Dustin Hoffman talk about playing a middle-aged woman in the movie, *Tootsie*. The interview went viral because Hoffman, fighting back tears, spoke of feeling like crap when Hollywood make-up wizards couldn't transform him into a beautiful woman. As the character Tootsie, he believed he made "an interesting woman," but he also acknowledged that had he—Hoffman—met Tootsie at a party, he'd never talk to her. That's because Tootsie didn't "fulfill physically the demands that we're brought up to think women have to have in order for us to ask them out."

The interview arced when Hoffman said that he'd been "brainwashed" into believing beauty was the sole measuring stick for sorting women. As a result, over the course of his life, he had missed countless chances to meet not-so-beautiful but nonetheless "interesting women."

It was a candid admission about shallowness.

When I lived as a dude, I never cared about my looks. Sure, I wanted to be fit, but it didn't

matter to me if some other guy was more desirable because of how he looked.

I figured that my charming personality, along with my ability to make an inside joke, were all that mattered.

All of that changed when I transitioned to womanhood. Suddenly, how I looked became an all-consuming priority. Is my eyeliner done right? Does my forever flat hair have even a hint of body? What in the world am I gonna do about that Samsonite—puffy bags—under my eyes?

And my man-handles? They had to go. I dieted and worked out like some twenty-something gym rat.

A year into my transition, I underwent big time plastic surgery, something called "facial feminization." The surgery seemed to work—a new chin and prominent cheekbones, a woman's nose, no more eye baggage, and way fewer wrinkles. I was lucky to be able to do this, and I hoped that it would pave the way for a relationship with someone special.

I hoped I'd be *beautiful enough*.

Thus, you'll understand that jealousy was my immediate reaction to that man's comment about Lucy in the Dinkytown restaurant—that she was beautiful enough to evoke a stranger's compliment.

Another reaction? Real hurt because the stranger didn't throw in, "You're cute too."

As a society, we really are brainwashed about beauty and the privileges that go with it, just as Dustin Hoffman confessed. It happens early and often—in magazines (think *Seventeen* or *Teen Vogue*; a recent cover of *Justine* had the teaser, "Look & Feel Great!"), the mov-

ies (Disney didn't pick the title, *Beauty and the Beast*, for just no reason), and television. For example, name one even semi-ugly leading female television character. (I'm sure there's one or two, but you get the point.)

The brainwashing never ends. Those Viagra commercials are filled with pretty people. Jamie Lee Curtis—no slouch in the beauty department—does a great job touting a yogurt to "regulate" seniors' digestive systems.

There's one more point. Let's be honest about the gay community; we all know how much good looks, tight bodies and youth count. For many, they are gatekeeping characteristics.

Personality? What does *that* matter as long as I get to kiss his beautiful face and lay in bed next to his killer body.

Of course, I paint with an exceedingly broad brush. Please indulge me.

I'm not innocent here, either. While I fret about my looks, I'm damn picky about the relative beauty of those I date. I've turned down some very nice—and *interesting*—people because they didn't fit my preconceived notion of what's attractive.

Yet, I felt the sting of that Dinkytown stranger's remark.

That was until the next day, when another stranger offered, "Hey pretty lady," as I passed by in a downtown skyway.

For a moment, I felt good about my looks. ◻

Ellie Krug is the author of *Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change*. She welcomes your comments at ellenkrugwriter@gmail.com



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OUR VOICES



DATELAND | Jennifer Parelo

A Piece of Me

I had to go to the dentist today because a piece of my tooth fell out of my head. Yes, I'm now at that stage of life where I'm beginning to shed pieces of my body.

I was eating cereal when it happened. Initially, I thought the tooth piece was an especially hard cereal nugget. When I spit it out to examine it, I discovered it was a tooth particle. And more importantly, it was from a tooth that has served as my imaginary friend since age 9.

I suppose that deserves a bit of explanation.

The tooth I'm referring to is a bit of a freak. No, not because it's my imaginary friend. But because of its early life inside my mouth.

This tooth descended from a place called Tooth Heaven that exists in my jaw's atmosphere. This is where all adult teeth live while they wait for baby teeth to be mined from the mouth by the Tooth Fairy. Of all the magical creatures from childhood, I consider the Tooth Fairy the most suspect and diabolical. This creature, like some Dickensian villain, convinces children to merrily yank teeth from their own jaws in exchange for a couple dollars.

I had a particularly headstrong baby tooth, though. It stubbornly stayed rooted long after its young chums had been evacuated from my jaw. As a result, the adult tooth—the one that would become my imaginary friend—was forced to grow on top of it. This created an awkward situation in my mouth. The adult literally forcing out the child, who was as reluctant to give way to its mature self as I was.

And, so, for about a year, I lived with this stalemate, as well as a pronounced bulge in my upper right jaw. Happily, this development occurred at a time in my life when children are expected to recognize

their left from their right. It is one of the unknowable pieces of life that you are just supposed to know. But I struggled with it because right and left make no sense to me. They are not fixed directions like north or south, but considered "relative directions" with no absolute frame of reference.

I was routinely humiliated by my battleaxe of a third-grade teacher for my inability to master this abstract concept. But the errant tooth came to my rescue. I knew it existed on my right side. So, I got in the habit of touching my tongue to my freak tooth each time I was asked to identify my right from my left. Soon, it became an automatic reflex that continued long after the baby tooth finally left and the adult tooth settled into its rightful spot.

As I grew older, the tongue-to-tooth reflex became an internal compass to guide me through life's other unknowables, particularly when it came to affairs of the heart. Through my 20s and 30s, as I tumbled like a drunken toddler from one relationship to another, my tongue would massage the tooth soothingly as I attempted to navigate the confusing coordinates of love, rubbing off most of the tooth's enamel in the process.

Now, in my 40s, my tongue almost never races to that tooth for reflexive comfort. Maybe it's because I'm no longer threatened by the indefinite, whether its aimless directionals that seem to have no place in the laws of physics, or the unfathomable nature of the human heart. I simply accept that there are some things that are meant to be unknown and unclear paths you are destined to stumble down.

And when my internal compass fails me, I can simply take it to the dentist and he'll patch it right up. □

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Drunken Amnesia and Lusty Lesbian Liaison

Dear Ms. Behavior:

My friend Dave and I celebrated his promotion by going out for dinner and drinking too much. I've always been attracted to Dave and in our drunken silliness, I somehow managed to seduce him. The sex wasn't great (because of the alcohol), and it's not something I'd necessarily want to do again. The problem is that Dave doesn't seem to remember what happened. When I mentioned that night in a recent conversation, he thanked me for getting him home safely and making sure he didn't go home with anyone. Apparently, he doesn't remember that he went home with me! I feel a little weird that he doesn't seem to know what happened between us. Should I tell him?

-STILL HUNG OVER

Dear Still Hung Over:

If only Dave were a straight young athlete or a pizza delivery boy and had gotten tipsy instead of smashed, your story would have all the ingredients of a porn video. But mediocre sex hardly seems worth the celluloid or the hangover.

As a general rule, when a friend has an alcohol-related blackout, it's probably helpful to fill him in on what (or whom) he did, if

only so he can take appropriate action, e.g., apologize, take a bath, find his wallet, etc. In this case, it seems unlikely that Dave would suffer any physical or emotional harm if you didn't mention it, but it's creepy to keep it a secret. Tell him, as kindly and casually as possible, about your shared unmemorable sexual experience.

Dear Ms. Behavior:

My dear straight friend Margaret, who's married to my other friend Richard, is dying to hook up with a woman. Margaret says she's extra horny now for some hormonal reason that I don't want to know about, and wants me to secretly fix her up with a butch dyke who's interested in a fling. I'm a gay man and I do have some lesbian friends, but I don't know if I should participate in this. I'd like to help Margaret, but I'm not sure I'd feel good about it, because she'd be betraying Richard, who's a great guy. What do you think I should do?

-BETWIXT AND BETWEEN

Dear Betwixt and Between:

Don't allow Margaret and her throbbing libido to place a heavy burden on you. You might be willing to pimp her out for the week-

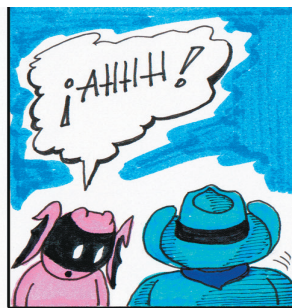
end to one of your butch friends if you didn't care for Richard and have strong feelings about their commitment. But since Margaret isn't willing to tell Richard about her plans and since you have misgivings about being involved, you need not act as facilitator for her fantasy.

At the same time, you're not the protector of Margaret's relationship, so you also needn't offer her self-help books on restoring passion to heterosexual marriage or withhold directions to the nearest dyke bar, should she ask. If Margaret does decide to try to find a woman without you, you'll need to set your own limits regarding your involvement. You may feel fine, for example, about offering suggestions on a lesbian-luring hairstyle—so long as it's nothing too retro or embarrassing, like, say, a mullet—and providing information about lesbian cultural history, but not feel comfortable offering tips about muff diving. (As if.) ■

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Alannah – Through the Eyes of Brandi R.

Cotton ball clouds on postcard skies. Seventy degrees. Spring's sweet perfume. Today's reminiscent of childhood, when Tampa weather underlined the season with grass so lush, wearing shoes was a sin.

Brandi's 24 years old. It's 2008.

She stands with her extended family by a park picnic canopy after an Easter church service, where this morning, by grace, she reunited with her father after a 10-year estrangement. Today's already been one of the best of her life.

But now under the mourning dove's song, Brandi stands breathless with her family. Her 13 month-old daughter, Alannah, lie in the dirt, motionless and in a postictal state. She's had a seizure.

Brandi's never seen this before; she isn't even sure what it is. She's dizzy with confusion. Overwhelmed with worry. And.. what do I do next? I'm supposed to take charge now, Brandi knows—that's what moms are for. But she's too flooded with emotion. She doesn't know what to do. Her mother takes handle.

What once she deemed a beautiful day she perceives now as eerie, too out of order, stark in contrast to the nearing sirens and ambulance lights.

The ambulance arrives. Out pours an older man who'll serve as Alannah's paramedic. He puts her on a gurney much too big, rubs alcohol on her arm, and administers an IV. The scene is unbearable.

Inside, the ambulance reeks of ammonia and Brandi feels sick. She hovers over her daughter, hoping for a sign of familiarity.

"Everything's going to be fine," says the paramedic, and though she trusts it's true,

Brandi can't help but think the worst.

At the hospital, Brandi talks with doctors. It's uncomfortable here—too sterile, she thinks—a place filled with misery but somehow devoid of emotion.

A doctor tells Brandi that Alannah has merely had a tempter-tantrum and that there's nothing to worry about. A tempter-tantrum! Brandi gawks at the notion, and soon develops an angry courage missing from before. Confusion and concern become command and resolve. This is no tempter-tantrum, Brandi knows, and how ridiculous the suggestion. The doctors here aren't taking her seriously, but they're going to—they better. There is something wrong with Alannah, and these doctors are going to find out what it is. Brandi chastises Alannah's flip-pant doctor.

A taken-more-seriously hour later, Alannah's test results come back normal, but her doctor concedes she's had a seizure. Not to worry, he says, childhood seizures aren't rare, and she'll likely never have a second.

She does.

Over the next several months, Alannah has more than a dozen seizures. She's diagnosed with epilepsy. The time is nerve-racking—every day brings with it the possibility of another episode, maybe one from which Alannah won't recover.

MRIs, cat scans, and endless check-ups follow. The medical bills pile high and, though Brandi knows now how to react when Alannah seizes, her worries remain. Will this be the Rest of Her Life?

On top of it all, Brandi has two other children who need feeding and clothing. The responsibilities, the worries, the To Dos

seem insurmountable. There isn't a moment passed without worry, however strong she seems. She clings to faith—and family—to press on.

The troubles don't end here. Doctors are concerned that, after so many seizures at so early an age, Alannah's development may be handicapped, and an already worn-down family is dealt another blow. Is this somehow my fault, Brandi asks. Is there something during my pregnancy I should've done—or shouldn't have?

... Years pass.

Four years later and Alannah is ready for kindergarten—a day for which Brandi has prepared. She'll no doubt hear news that Alannah has a learning disability, that she can't keep up with the other kids, that she'll require "special attention." But Brandi is undisturbed with the imminence. Her daughter is happy and healthy—for what more could she hope?

A day finally does come when school sends feedback regarding Alannah's learning ability: it's news that she's been placed not into a special education program, but at the top of her reading class, and has been recommended as a gifted student.

And that brings us here, to today, with the family sitting on the couch, watching 7th Heaven (the kids' favorite show), and living the life of a normal family—now with real, always-annoying but sometimes-cute temper-tantrums and all-knowing that this is better than any springtime grass or postcard sky. □

Brandi R. lives with her family in Tampa, Florida. Alannah, meanwhile, has taken a peculiar liking to vienna sausages dipped in ranch with macaroni and cheese.

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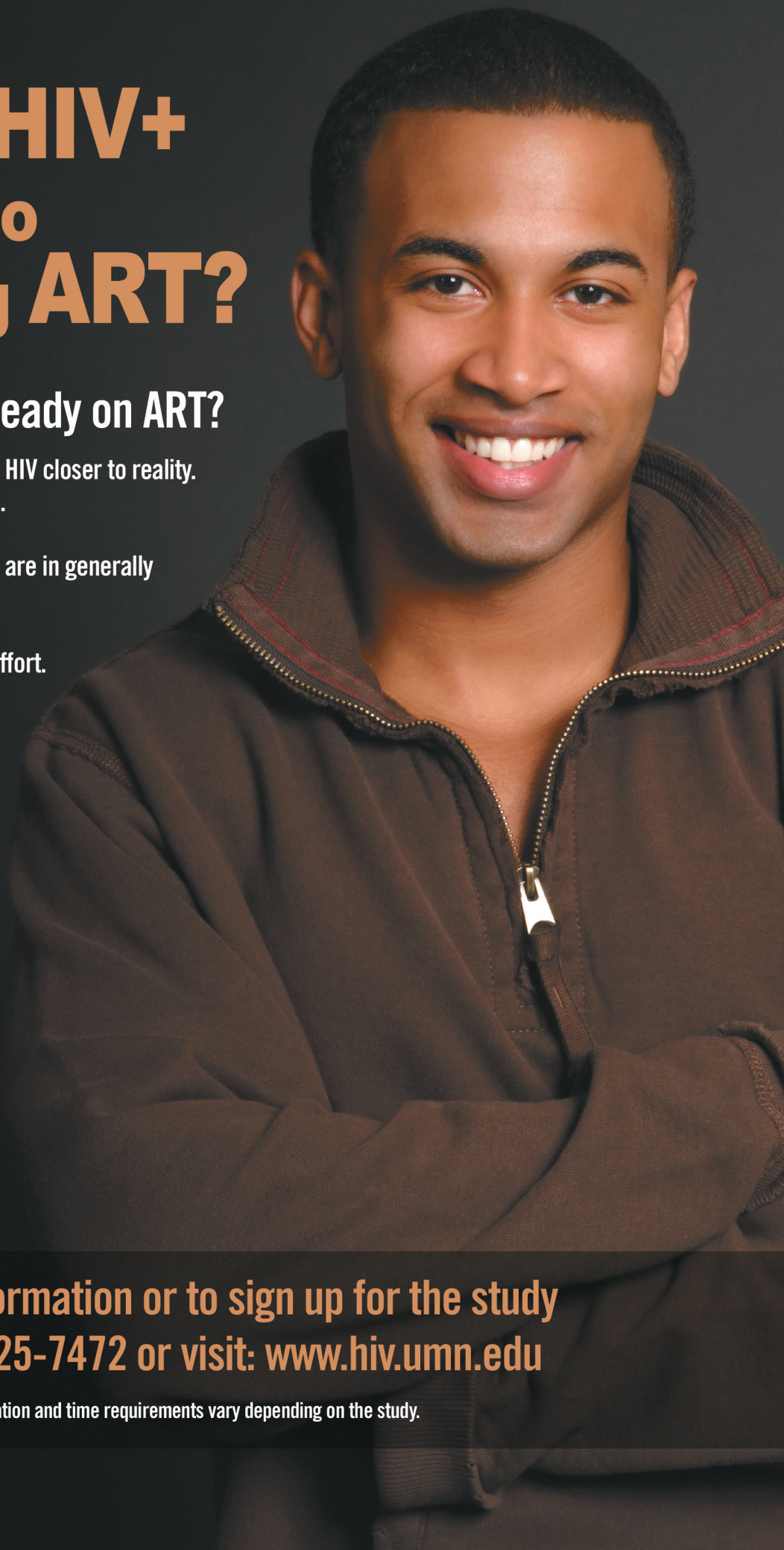
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